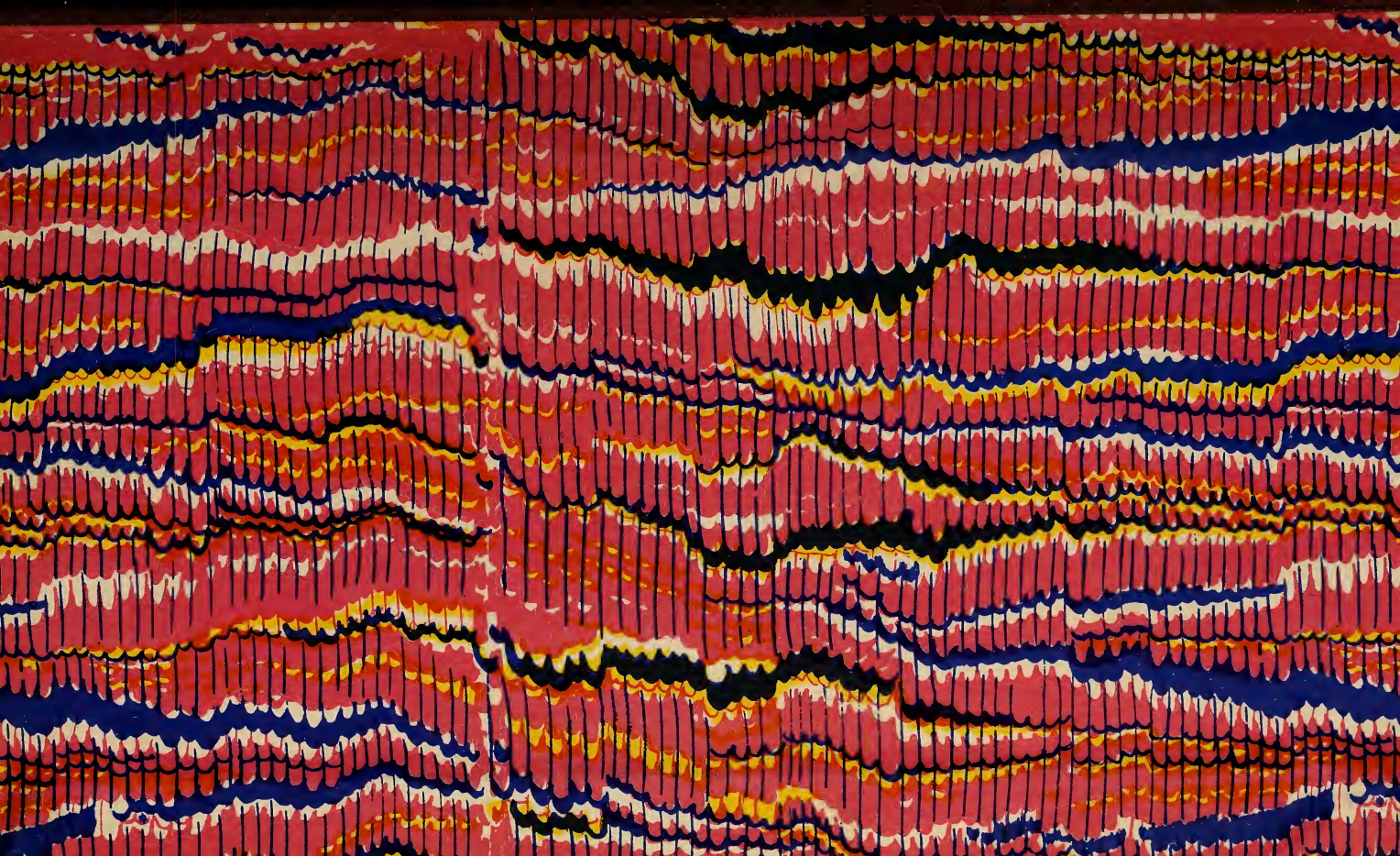

MADRAS GOVERNMENT MUSEUM.

Bulletin, Vol. V, No. 1.

ANTHROPOLOGY.

VISION OF THE URÁLIS AND SHOLAGAS; MORE MARRIAGE CUSTOMS IN SOUTHERN INDIA; HOOK-SWINGING; PALIYANS.

With Nine Plates.

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1903.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE VISION OF THE URÁLIS AND SHOLAGAS.

The Urális and Sholagas, on whom I made the following observations, were mostly the same individuals as those measured by Mr. Thurston, whom I accompanied to Dimbhum, and to whom I am very much indebted for the opportunity of examining these inhabitants of the Indian jungle.

I examined 65 Urális and 18 Sholagas, the subjects of investigation being visual acuity, colour vision and quantitative estimation of two visual illusions, a few observations being also made on other illusions.

These people were hardly ideal subjects for psychological experimentation. They came to us in a state of abject fear at the prospect of our examination, and in some cases continued so terrified throughout that their observations were of little value. In most cases, however, they soon found that we were comparatively harmless, and settled down to their observations satisfactorily, to become again much alarmed when they thought over the meaning and probable consequences of the examination.

The observations were conducted on the same lines as in my previous work in Torres Straits [1] and elsewhere. As usual I began the examination of an individual with Holmgren's wools and other tests of colour vision; but I will begin this exposition with a description of the acuteness of vision.

VISUAL ACUITY.

The test employed was that devised by Cohn, in which the letter E is exposed in various positions through a circular aperture in a card. A large letter E is pasted on a board and put into the hands of the native under examination, and he has to turn it round till its position corresponds with that of the letter shown to him. The procedure differed in one respect from that employed in Torres Straits,

[1] See 'Report of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits,' Volume II, Part I, 1901.

in that I began to show the E from a short distance, and gradually increased the distance till I reached a point at which the native could no longer recognize the position of the letter in four out of five times. The **E** used was of the No. 6 size, and the degree of acuity is expressed by a fraction, of which 6 is the denominator and the number of metres at which the position of the **E** was recognized is the numerator.

The observations were made in the open air. There were considerable differences of illumination, as some days were much more cloudy than others. Both Mr. Thurston and a Brahman forest ranger could, however, see quite as well on the dark as on the bright days, and I do not believe that the variations of illumination which occur in the open air, unless very great, have any appreciable influence on the acuity of vision.

The method was fairly readily acquired by most of the people, and, though some were very slow and had to be re-examined several times, there was no case in which I completely failed to get a result. I was struck by the fact that the older men acquired the method more readily and more intelligently than the younger men. This was in marked contrast to my experience in Torres Straits, where the boys and young men were, on the whole, distinctly quicker than the older men, probably owing to the influence of the school education the former had received. As usually happens, the natives had more difficulty in learning to distinguish between the positions of the E in which the three lines are horizontal than between those in which they are vertical.

I could not ascertain whether they had definite names which they applied to the four chief positions of the E, but they called the letter itself "*námam*," after the forehead sect-mark of the Vishnavites.

Fifty-five Urális and sixteen Sholagas were tested. The average vision of both groups taken together was $\frac{12{\cdot}4}{6}$ or 2·07. That of the Urális was $\frac{12{\cdot}2}{6}$ or 2·03; that of the Sholagas was $\frac{13{\cdot}2}{6}$ or 2·2. The Sholagas recognized the position of the letter a metre farther away than the Urális. The superiority of the Sholagas is, however, due to the fact that they were a younger and more able-bodied group of men

than the Urális. The former were all less than 45 years of age, and, if compared with Urális under 45, the difference between the two groups is much less, viz., $\frac{13{\cdot}2}{6}$ and $\frac{12{\cdot}9}{6}$.

The best result was given by a Sholaga who was serving under the Forest Department as bungalow watcher. He recognized the position of the E correctly at 18 metres. This man also seemed distinctly superior to the rest in general intelligence, though it may only have been that he had had more intercourse with the outside world, and was, in consequence, less timid and reserved.

The lowest acuity occurred in the case of an elderly man who only recognized the position of the letter at $1\frac{1}{2}$ metres. He had some diffused haziness of the cornea, but this did not seem sufficient to account for his low acuity, and he probably had some change in the lens also.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the results, is the very small degree of variation shown in the group of men tested. The number of individuals who succeeded at each distance was as follows :—one at 1·5 metres, one at 5 metres, 2 at 8 m., 3 at 9 m., 3 at 10 m., 10 at 11 m., 15 at 12 m., 13 at 13 m., 10 at 14 m., 8 at 15 m., 3 at 16 m., and one each at 17 and 18 m. Fifty-six of the people, or 78·8 per cent., succeeded in the test between 11 and 15 metres inclusive.

The average visual acuity of the Urális and Sholagas corresponds very closely with that of the Torres Straits Islanders; the former being 2·07 and the latter 2·12. The latter, however, included a much large proportion of elderly men. The figures for the Torres Strait Islands, Sholagas and Urális under 45 years of age are 2·28, 2·2 and 2·15 respectively. If the Islanders had been tested with the No. 6 letter, they should have recognised its position at 13·7 m. as compared with the 13·2 m. of the Sholagas and the 12·9 m. of the Urális. The differences are so slight that one is justified in saying that the jungle tribe have the same visual acuity as the Islanders.

There was a distinct decrease in visual acuity with advancing age. The ages assigned to the people can only be a rough approximation to their real ages, but are probably not more than 5 years out in any case. Grouping the men according to periods of 5 years, the following are the results, the figures in brackets giving the number of individuals belonging to each period, while the acuity is expressed by the number of metres at which the letter

could be recognized: above 55 years of age, (5), acuity, 7·9 m.; 50–55, (3), 11·13; 45–50, (7), 11·1; 40–45, (10), 11·5; 35–40, (11), 13·5; 30–35, (13), 13·6; 25–30, (10), 13·0, and below 25 years, (12), the distance was 13·2 metres.

In Torres Straits the falling off in visual acuity began earlier, viz., between 35 and 40 years of age, and was much more marked. The uncertainty as to the accuracy of the ages in both communities is too great to allow one to attach much importance to the former difference, but the extent of the decrease in Torres Straits was so much greater than among the Urális and Sholagas as to leave no doubt that the influence of advancing age was smaller among the jungle folk than among the Islanders.

In nearly all individuals there was pigmentation of the conjunctiva, chiefly in the diffuse form; no isolated patches of pigment were seen such as I have observed elsewhere. In one or two cases the pigment was in distinct lines radiating from the edge of the cornea; a condition I have not observed elsewhere. In many cases there was a distinct ring of pigment surrounding the cornea of the same kind as that I observed in Torres Straits but less definite.

Injection and thickening of the conjunctiva was common, especially in the situation where pterygium is found, but there was no case of distinct pterygium involving the cornea. In several individuals, however, there was definite pinguicula.

Several of the older men had true arcus senilis, but the indefinite and superficial haziness resembling arcus, which was so common in Torres Straits, was here almost absent. The appearance of a blue ring round the margin of the cornea, which is probably due to a slight degree of this change, was often seen. In several cases corneal opacities were present, which were in nearly every case ascribed to small-pox. One man was almost completely blind in both eyes from extensive corneal scarring said to have been the result of small-pox, and another man had a blind and shrunken eyeball, of which the cause was doubtful.

COLOUR VISION.

All the natives who came to us were tested with Holmgren's wools. All those whose examination suggested the possibility of defective colour vision were tested with Nagel's cards and Lovibond's tintometer, and the latter instrument

was also used to determine the thresholds for different colours by the same method which I had previously employed in Torres Straits and Egypt.[1] Of the 81 people tested, only one man, a Urâli, was definitely colour blind. He matched red with brown and green; green with grey; pink with blue and violet, and was a typical example of red-green blindness.

The general behaviour with the wools was an extreme example of the kind that I have called the "Torres Straits type," *i.e.*, red was confused with pink; green with blue; and blue with violet; while there was a tendency to put together the more faintly coloured wools according to shade and tint rather than according to colour-tone. These characteristics were present to a more marked degree than in Torres Straits, and in a larger proportion of individuals. There were only four individuals out of the 81 examined who did not show one or more of these characteristics. No less than 14 also matched or compared the pink test wool with violet wools, nearly always, however, with violets or purples which had a considerable amount of red in them and approached the pink in colour-tone. In this respect these people resembled the natives of Upper Egypt very closely. These matches were of a kind which would almost certainly indicate weakness of the red-green sense in an European, but for the same reasons which I have advanced in the case of the Egyptians, I do not believe that they indicated any degree of Daltonism, but were due to the influence of nomenclature probably combined with some degree of insensitiveness to blue. All succeeded in naming the discs correctly in Nagel's cards, and recognized red glasses in Lovibond's tintometer as readily as those of other colours. Many were exceptionally good with Nagel's test. It is, of course, impossible to say that some of these people may not have had some degree of weakness of the red-green sense, but I have little doubt that their behaviour was due to the causes I have indicated.

Rough observations with Lovibond's tintometer, sufficient to ascertain the existence or absence of any decided insensitiveness to red were made in many cases. A complete examination with this instrument in order to determine the thresholds for red, yellow and blue, was made on 14 individuals, and the results are shown in the following table:—

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1 'Journal of Anthrop. Inst.,' 1901, XXXI, p. 229.

TABLE I.

Name.	Red.	Yellow.	Blue.
Nanjen	20	30	80
Chika Nanjan	40	20	70
Masana	15	30	80
Dundun	20	30	50
Jadaya	15	40	40
Javana	30	15	40
Jadaya Madha	15	20	50
Chika Jadaya	30	15	80
Dŏda Jadaya	40	40	100
Badra	20	20	80
Kethei	40	20	70
Jadaya	20	20	80
Komba	70	40	60
Bomma	60	30	50
Average	31·1	26·4	66·4
Maximum	70	40	100
Minimum	15	15	40
M.V.	13·53	7·86	15·51
$\frac{\text{M.V.}}{\text{A.}}$	·435	·297	·233

This examination is one requiring a large amount of care and demands prolonged attention, yet I had very few failures to obtain a definite result. Usually one period of rest was given during the series, and in two cases two rests were necessary before satisfactory thresholds were obtained. The method followed was exactly the same as that I used in Egypt, and the results corresponded very closely with those obtained in that country, the thresholds for the three colours being 31·1, 26·4 and 66·4 in the Indian tribes as compared with 28·6, 26·0 and 85·4 in the Egyptian peasants.

The results given opposite M.V. in Table I give the mean variations by which the results of the 14 individuals deviated from the average; they give a measure of the variability of the individuals of the group examined. For each colour the variation is less than in the case of the Egyptians, especially in the case of blue.

In comparing the groups in respect of variability, it is in some ways more satisfactory to take the mean variation in its relation to the average, and the figures indicating this relation are given in the bottom line of the table. These figures are very much smaller than those of the Egyptians, and slightly smaller than those of Murray Island.

The results with the tintometer are (i) that the thresholds for the different colours agree more closely with those of the natives of Upper Egypt than with those of Papuan or English subjects, the Indian natives seeming, however, to be somewhat more sensitive to blue than the Egyptians; and (ii) that the mean variations point to the conclusion that the Indian natives form a more homogeneous and less variable group than either the Egyptian or Papuan natives.

The language employed to denote colour showed exactly the same characteristics as those usually met with in uncivilized races. The Urális and Sholagas live in a region which lies between different linguistic districts; the people on the south being predominantly Tamil, while those on the north are Canarese. In correspondence with this position, the people used colour terms from both languages. The majority of the Urális and all the Sholagas applied to red and a crimson-purple the Canarese term *kempu*, while the minority of the Urális used the Tamil term *sikapu*. Those who used Tamil words called orange and yellow *manjal*; some of the others used the Canarese term *arsena*, while others called yellow *haseru*, the Canarese term for green, and either called orange *kempu* or could not give it a name.

No one used the Tamil word *pachai* for green, but nearly all called it *haseru*, while some called this colour *masalai* used otherwise for grey and brown. A few called green *kangu*. Blue and indigo were only called *nil* by four individuals. The others called blue *haseru*, *kala* or *karupu*. Indigo was almost unanimously called *kala*, *kara* or *karupu* (black).

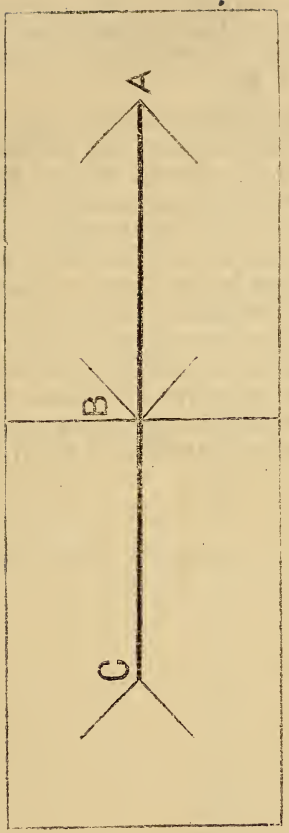
Violet was usually called either *haseru* or *karupu*; one man called this colour *káká* after the crow, and three men called it *kempu*. A very large number of names were applied to brown papers and wools, including *kempu*, *manjal*, *haseru*, *karupu*, *nila*, and *masalai*, while several called brown *puthi*, ash-colour, or *kangu* used otherwise for green. White was unanimously called *vellapu*. Black was usually named *karupu*, more rarely *kala*, *haseru*, *masalai*, or *nila*. Greys were usually called *vellapu* if light; *karupu*, *haseru*, *masalai* or *nila* if dark.

The only difference between the Urális and Sholagas was that the use of Tamil words was limited to the former. The vocabularies show exactly the same peculiarities as those I have found in Torres Straits, Upper Egypt and elsewhere. There was perfectly definite nomenclature for red; less definite nomenclature for yellow; a definite term for green, which was, however, also used for brown and grey, and sometimes for black. Light blue was sometimes given the same name as green, but was usually called black, while the darker indigo was almost unanimously given the same name as black. The common Indian word for blue, *nil* or *nila*, was very little used, and just as often for black as for blue.

Violet was given the same name as other dark colours, but the red element in this colour was recognized by a few who called it *kempu*. There was no word for brown, objects of this colour being called red, yellow, green, black or grey according to their colour-tone and shade.

Corresponding to the defective nomenclature for blue, there was the same high threshold for this colour in the tintometer test which I have found in Murray Island and Upper Egypt, places characterized by the same defects of colour nomenclature. The threshold for blue was almost the same as that found in Murray Island. Here, as elsewhere, defective nomenclature for blue appears to be associated with a certain degree of insensitiveness to this colour.

There was an almost complete absence of the tendency common among many races, to name colours by direct comparison with natural objects, the only example of the tendency being that of the man who called violet *káká* (crow).



VISUAL ILLUSIONS.

Quantitative observations were made on two visual illusions, viz., the Müller-Lyer illusion, and the illusion depending on erroneous estimation of a vertical as compared with a horizontal distance.

The Müller-Lyer illusion was tested with an improved form of the apparatus I employed in Torres Strait. In this new form the lines have been made much thinner, while the general dimensions of the figure remain the same. The line of junction between the two parts of the instrument corresponds with the division between the two parts of the

figure instead of crossing the variable line as in the older form. The subject of the test has to adjust the instrument shown in the figure till the line B C seems to him to be equal to the line A B.

The results with this instrument are shown in Table II, which is constructed in the same manner as Table XIV in the Reports of the Torres Straits Expedition.[1] Each native had to adjust the apparatus five times by pushing in the slide till the two lines of the figure appeared equal to one another, and then he adjusted the apparatus five times by moving the slide in the reverse direction till the two parts again appeared equal. The average results for the first five observations are given in column B, those of the second five in column C, while the averages of the whole ten measurements are given in column A. The figures in these columns give the average of the length of the line B C which appeared equal to the line A B. The latter line was 75 mm. in length.

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[1] These Reports may be consulted for the details of the method of investigation.

Table II.

Name.	A	B	M.V.	C	M.V.
Nanjan	62·9	65·8	1·76	60·0	3·60
Masana *	53·4	50·8	2·24	56·0	2·40
Banasi	51·1	51·8	3·84	50·4	2·48
Nanjen	57 8	59·0	2·00	56·6	3·28
Kalen	51·8	51·2	2·08	52·4	1·28
Raman	56·9	59·6	3·84	54·2	3·12
Badra *	56·1	58·8	1·76	53·4	1·68
Dundun *	57·2	59·0	1·60	55·4	2·08
Mari *	53·7	57·8	2·24	49·6	2·08
Nanjan	50·3	54·4	3·12	46·2	2·56
Badra	52·8	54·8	1·84	50·8	3·36
Raman *	48·3	51·6	2·08	45·0	2·40
Madhan *	46·9	47·6	2·32	46·2	2·16
Masana *	58·6	61·0	4·40	56·2	2·16
Badra	57·7	60·8	3·84	54·6	4·32
Reisan	58·7	60·2	1·84	57·2	2·24
Maran *	48·2	48·8	1·84	47·6	4·08
Mundei	54·0	55·2	2·16	52·8	1·44
Kunei	55·1	60·4	2·88	49·8	2·64
Sodala *	51·2	52·0	·80	50·4	·88
Javana	61·6	64·6	2·08	58·6	3·28
Jadaya Madha *	55·7	56·4	1·68	55·0	1·20
Kumba	57·9	56·6	1·28	59·2	3·76
Jadaya *	54·6	58·4	·88	50·8	1·04
Javana	63·2	65 2	4·06	61·2	2·08
Jadaya	59·1	56·6	4·88	61·6	2·24
Badra	59·7	64·0	1·60	55·4	1·28
Keta	53·2	58·8	3·04	47·6	1·12
Average	55·3	57·2	2·46	53·4	2·36
Average *	**53·1**	**54·7**	**1·98**	**51·4**	**2·01**

The first twenty individuals of this Table are Urális, and the last eight are Sholagas. The latter made distinctly higher measurements, but the number examined is too small to allow one to attach any great importance to this difference.

Neither people did these measurements well. It seemed doubtful in some cases whether they really understood what I wanted them to do. So much did this appear to be the case that I should hesitate as to whether the results were worthy of publication, if it were not that the figures seem to show that the people must have been doing their task more satisfactorily than observation of their behaviour indicated.

In the first place the average mean variations are not high—2·46 and 2·36 as compared with 2·77 and 2·03 of Murray Island natives, and 2·09 and 1·58 of English subjects.[1]

Secondly, the figures in columns B and C show exactly the same characteristic which I have found to be universally present with both civilized and uncivilized subjects. The average for the observations, when the variable is made equal to the standard by a process of shortening, is larger than when the movement takes place in the reverse direction. This feature is not only shown by the average, but occurs in the measurement of no less than 24 out of the 28 individuals tested.

Lastly, I noted eleven individuals as doing the test satisfactorily, so far as could be judged from observation of their demeanour. I have marked the names of these men with asterisks in Table II, and have given their results at the bottom of the Table; and it will be seen that, though their results differ from those of the whole group, the difference is not great. The conclusion based on their demeanour, that their observations were being made more satisfactorily, is confirmed by their mean variations which are distinctly smaller than those of the whole group.

These observations were not made with the same apparatus as employed in Torres Straits: the results in the two places are, therefore, not strictly comparable. Comparative observations carried out elsewhere have shown, however, that there is no great difference in the results obtained with the two instruments, and the figures of the Indian tribes and the Torres Straits Islanders differ from one another sufficiently to merit consideration.

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[1] See Table XVIII of the Reports.

When the Urális and Sholagas adjusted the length of the line B C till it appeared to them to be equal to A B, the average result was that they made the former line 55·3 mm. in length; a line 55·3 mm. in length terminating in diverging lines appeared to them to be equal to one 75 mm in length, which was partially enclosed by lines. The Murray Islander made the line B C 61·1 mm. in length, and the English observers 55·6 mm. The Indian jungleman appears to resemble the Englishman rather than the Papuan.

This somewhat strange result is, I think, capable of explanation. I have shown elsewhere [1] that the illusion in question seems to be less marked to the Papuan than to the Englishman, and I have explained this result by supposing that the former attended more closely to the lines he was desired to make equal, and was less influenced by the appearance of the figure as a whole. I communicated directly with the Murray Islander in English which he understood well, and I pointed out to him carefully the lines he was to make equal, and in so doing directed his attention predominantly to those lines. In India I had to communicate with the people through interpreters, and I was continually noticing that the interpreters did not rigorously point out the lines I wished to be compared, but were often satisfied with roughly indicating the different parts of the figure. I always endeavoured to correct this, but it is most probable that the natives did not grasp so completely as the Murray Islanders the fact that they were to make the lines A B and B C equal, and I suspect that they were often trying to make the two parts of the figure similar to one another, and were not devoting their attention exclusively, or even predominantly, to the lines. If this suspicion be justified, it would explain why the member of a wild jungle tribe should resemble the European rather than the Papuan. It is because he is attending, like the European, to the figure as a whole, but doing so merely because the problem has not been put before him properly.

The mean variation of the results of the twenty-eight individuals from the average result (M.V.) is 3·52 as compared with 3·89 for Murray Island and 5·02 of English observers.

The illusion depending on erroneous estimation of a vertical as compared with a horizontal distance was measured by means of a piece of apparatus devised by Mr. Horace Darwin and myself.[2] The native under examination had

[1] See Reports, p. 126.

[2] Proc. Physiol. Soc., p. XI, Journ. of Physiol. XXVIII, 1902.

to adjust the length of a vertical white line on a background till it appeared to him to be equal in length to a horizontal line extending to the right from the bottom of the vertical line. As in the case of the Müller-Lyer illusion, five measurements were made by shortening the vertical line till it appeared equal to the horizontal, and five observations by lengthening the line, and the figures given in Table III are arranged on the same plan as those for the Müller-Lyer illusion, the figures in column A giving the averages of the whole ten observations made by each individual; those in column B the averages of the first five observations when the variable line was adjusted by making it shorter, and those in column C the averages when the variable line was lengthened.

The length of the constant horizontal line was 100 mm. and the numbers in columns A, B and C of Table III give the length in millimetres of the vertical line which seemed to the people to be equal in length to the constant horizontal line.

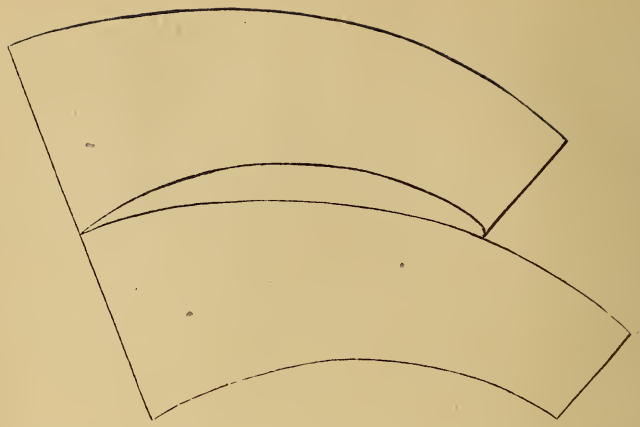
TABLE III.

Name.	A	B	M.V.	C	M.V.
Badra	91·7	96·6	2·48	86·8	2·32
Raman	96·4	96·4	4·72	96·4	3·92
asana	82·5	85·0	4·00	80·0	2·00
Badra	92·8	90·4	2·48	95·2	1·76
Nanjan	99·6	99·0	0·80	100·2	2·16
Dundun	85·8	88·0	2·40	83·6	2·08
Viran	98·6	98·4	0·96	98·8	6·16
Gope	93·6	92·6	2·08	94·6	3·68
Sodala	95·7	98·0	2·80	93·4	2·24
Bomma	94·1	92·0	1·60	96·2	4·64
Badra	100·4	102·4	2·88	98·4	3·12
Kethei	92·0	91·8	3·04	92·2	2·24
Kumba	90 2	95·2	6·24	85·2	1·04
Bomma	89·7	89·4	5·28	90·0	3·60
Average	93·1	93·9	2·98	92·2	2 93

The first ten people in this list are Urális, and the last four Sholagas. This test was not done as readily as that in which the Müller-Lyer illusion was measured. The reason for this was almost certainly the fact that the lines were adjusted by a more complicated mechanism. In the case of the Müller-Lyer illusion the subject has simply to slide one surface over another; in the illusion of compared horizontal and vertical lines, the threads forming the lines are adjusted in length by means of an arrangement at the back of the board, and out of the sight of the subject of the test. The native had, therefore, to do three things simultaneously; he had to hold the board upright in one hand, adjust the arrangement behind the board with the other hand, and attend to the result of this adjustment. The effort was altogether too much for some of the natives, while the attempts of those who succeeded were obviously not very satisfactory. Still here again the smallness of the mean variations seems to show that the results of the measurements were fairly constant. Two of the natives had very large variations, viz., Viran and Kumba, but I especially noted these men as doing the test well, so far as could be judged from observations of their behaviour and method of adjustment. The former made his first five measurements with very little variation, and then, on changing the direction of adjustment, seemed to find it very difficult to make a measurement. In his case I repeated the whole series, when he again did the first five measurements well, while making his second five abnormally long.

The tendency for the result to be influenced by the direction of adjustment of the lines was of the same kind as in the case of the Müller-Lyer illusion, but was less marked and much less constant. These were the first measurements made with this instrument, and I must content myself here with publishing the figures, and leave their comparison with those obtained in other races till another occasion.

Several other figures illustrating visual illusions were shown to some of the more intelligent (or less timid) natives, but in most cases it was impossible to decide whether the illusions were or were not present. There was no doubt, however, that several of the natives saw the apparent divergence or convergence of the lines in Zöllner's and allied figures. They also saw, and were much impressed by the following illusion shown in Fig. 6 of the Reports.



The results obtained in this examination of the Urális and Sholagas show a close agreement in general with those I have obtained elsewhere on other uncivilized races. The chief interest of these observations lies in the fact that they were made on people wilder than any I had previously examined.

W. H. R. RIVERS.

During a recent tour in the Mysore Province the visual acuity of 30 Bráhmans and 39 non-Brahmans belonging to various classes was tested with a letter E of the same size as that used by Dr. Rivers, with the following results :—

	Age.			Distance in metres at which letter E was read.		
	Max.	Min.	Average.	Max.	Min.	Average.
Bráhmans ...	50	23	33·2	17	8	12·2
Non-Bráhmans.	50	19	33·4	16	7·5	12·2

The average distance at which the letter was read, it may be noted, coincides not only in the two sections of the community examined by myself, but with that recorded for the fifty-five Urális who were tested by Dr. Rivers.

E. T.

MORE MARRIAGE CUSTOMS IN SOUTHERN INDIA.

THE following note is intended to supplement the information relating to marriage customs, which is contained in Bulletin Vol. IV, No. 3.

I have there referred (p. 145) to the mock marriage with the arka plant (*Calotropis gigantea*), which is celebrated before a Bráhman marries a third wife. "The plant," Mr. A. Srinivasan writes,[1] "is named arka after the sun." When the car of the sun turns towards the north, every Hindu applies the leaves of this plant to his head before he bathes, in honour of the event. The plant is, besides, believed to be a willing scapegoat to others' ills. Oil and ghee (clarified butter) applied to the head of the victim of persistent illness has only to be transferred to this plant, when it withers and saves the man, even as Baber is said to have saved his son. The poet Kalidása describes sweet Sakuntala, born of a shaggy dweller of the forest, as a garland of jasmine thrown on an arka plant. "May the arka grow luxuriant in your house" is the commonest form of curse. "Be thou belaboured with arka leaves" is familiar in the mouths of reprimanding mothers. Adulterers were, half a century ago, seated on an ass, face towards the tail, and marched through the village. The public disgrace was enhanced by applying the despised arka leaves to their head. A Telugu proverb asks in triumph "Does the bee ever seek the arka flower"? The reasons for the ill-repute that this plant suffers from are not at all clear. The fact that it has a partiality for wastes has evidently brought on its devoted head the dismal associations of desolation, but there would seem to be more deep-seated hatred to the plant than has been explained. A Tamil proverb has it that "he earns merit who crushes the bud of the arka." Some Telugu and Kanarese Bráhmans, who follow the Yajur or Rig Véda, consider the arka plant as sacred, and use the leaves thereof during the nanthi (ancestor invoking) ceremony which is performed as one of

[1] 'Madras Christian College Magazine,' March 1903.

the marriage rites. Two or three arka leaves, with betel leaves and nuts, are tied to the cloth which is attached to a stick as representing the ancestors (pithrus). With some the arka leaves are replaced by leaves of *Pongamia glabra*. Bráhmans who follow the Sáma Véda, during the annual upákarmam ceremony, make use of arka leaves and flowers in worshipping the Rishis and pithrus. On the upákarmam day the Sáma-Védis invoke their sixty-two Rishis and the last three ancestors, who are represented by sixty-five clay balls placed on arka leaves. To them are offered arka flowers, fruits of karai-chedi (*Canthium parviflorum*) and naval (*Eugenia Jambolana*). In addition to this worship, they perform the Rishi and pithru tharpanam by offering water, gingelly (*Sesamum indicum*) seeds, and rice. The celebrant, prior to dipping his hand into the water, places in his hands two arka leaves, gingelly and rice.[1] The juice of the arka plant is a favourite agent in the hands of suicides.

I have already referred to the custom among the Dandásis (village watchmen) of Ganjám of a bachelor who wishes to marry a widow having first to marry a saháda or shádi tree, called in Telugu bharinike chettu. This tree is apparently *Streblus asper*, the twigs of which are stuck in and around thatched roofs of houses to ward off lightning. I am informed that this form of marriage obtains among other Oriya classes, including Bráhmans, and that a widower who wishes to remarry must first go through the ceremonial of marriage with this plant. Among the Dhobis of Mysore pre-puberty marriage is the rule, but puberty is no bar. The girl must, however, be first married to a tree or a sword before being married to the bridegroom.[2]

The Rázus (Telugu agriculturists), who are settled in Tinnevelly, claim to be Kshatriyas. Some of their women are gosha. Men may not shave the face, and wear a beard until their marriage. Nor are they, so long as they remain bachelors, invested with the sacred thread. At the marriage the bridegroom goes through the birth, naming, tonsure, and thread investiture ceremonies on the táli-tying day. These ceremonies are performed as with Bráhmans except that, in lieu of passages from the Védas, slokas specially prepared for the classes below the Bráhmans are chanted.

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[1] K. Rangachari, MS.

[2] 'Mysore Census Report,' 1901.

RÁZU BRIDEGROOM.

When the bride is with the bridegroom on the dais, a wide-meshed green curtain is thrown over her shoulders, and her hands are pressed over her eyes, and held there by one of her brothers, so that she cannot see. Generally two brothers sit by her side, and, when one is tired, the other relieves him. At the moment when the táli is tied, the bride's hands are removed from her face, and she is permitted to see her husband. On the third day the bride is brought to the marriage booth in a closed palanquin, and she is once more blindfolded while an elaborate ceremonial with pots is gone through.

The marriage ceremonies of the Kávarais (Tamil synonym for Balija) who are settled in Tinnevelly are like those of many other Telugu castes, and the interposition of a screen between the bride and bridegroom, and tying of the second táli or string of black beads on the nágavali day are performed. But those who belong to the símaneli sept go through two additional ceremonies. One of these, called Krishnamma perantálu, is performed on the day previous to the tying of the táli. It consists in the worship of the soul of Krishnamma, a married woman. A new cloth is purchased, and presented, together with money, betel, etc., to a married woman, who eats before those who are assembled. All the formalities of the srâddha ceremony are observed, except the burning of the sacred fire (homam) and repeating of mantras from the Védas. This ceremony is very commonly observed by Bráhmans, and castes which employ Bráhman priests for their ceremonials. The main idea is the propitiation of the soul of the deceased married woman. If in a family a married woman dies, every ceremony of an auspicious nature should be preceded by the worship of the Sumangali (married woman), which is known as Sumangali-prarthana. Orthodox women think that, if the soul of Sumangali is not thus worshipped, she may do some injury to those who are performing the ceremony. On the táli-tying day the Kávarai bride and bridegroom proceed to the temple, to worship. A few small pots are placed on the turban of the bridegroom, and on the head of the bride, where they are kept in position by the kongu or free end of her cloth. The sacred thread is worn during the marriage ceremony, but not afterwards.

The Ilaiyáttakudi section of the Chettis (merchants) has seven exogamous subdivisions, called kóvils or temples, which derive their names from seven favourite temples.

Ilaiyáttakudi is considered the parent temple, and, when a man of any of the other six kóvils is married, he has to obtain two garlands of flowers, one from the temple at that place, and one from the temple after which his subdivision is named.[1]

The Kondayamkottai Maravars, Mr. F. Fawcett tells us[2] are divided into six sub-tribes or trees. Each tree or kothu (branch) is divided into three khilais or branches. Those of the khilais belonging to the same tree or kothu are never allowed to intermarry. "A man or woman must marry with one of a khilai belonging to another tree than his own, his or her own being that of his or her mother, and not of the father. But marriage is not permissible between those of any two trees or kothus. There are some restrictions. For instance, a branch of betel vine or leaves may marry with a branch of cocoanut, but not with areca nuts or dates."

As regards marriage among the Khonds, a correspondent informs me that he once saw a bride going to her new home, riding on her uncle's shoulders, and wrapped in a red blanket. She was followed by a bevy of girls and relations, and preceded by drums and horns. He was told that the uncle had to carry her the whole way, and that, if he had to put her down, a fine in the shape of a buffalo was inflicted, the animal being killed and eaten on the spot. It is recorded that a European magistrate once mistook a Khond marriage for a riot, but, on enquiry, discovered his mistake.

A Pariah bride, at Coimbatore, is carried in the arms of her maternal uncle thrice round the wedding booth. At the same place, after the táli has been tied round the Odde (navvy) bride's neck, her maternal uncle ties a four-anna piece in her cloth, and carries her in his arms to the marriage booth. The Idaiyan (shepherd) bridegroom makes a present of four annas and betel to each of the bride's maternal uncles' sons, who have a natural right to marry her. The acceptance of the presents indicates their consent to the marriage. One of the bride's maternal uncles carries her in his arms to the marriage booth, while another uncle carries a lighted torch on a mortar. The light is placed in front of the contracting couple, who are seated side by side. The bride and bridegroom's wrists are tied together

[1] 'Madras Census Report,' 1901.
[2] Man., Vol. XXXIII, 1903.

by the maternal uncles' sons. When they retire to the bride's house, she is carried in the arms of the elder brother of the bridegroom. They are stopped by the maternal uncles' sons, who may beat the man who is carrying the bride. But, on payment by the bridegroom of four annas to each of his cousins, he and his bride are permitted to enter the house.

Among the Yerukalas, (nomad tribe) polygamy is practised, and the number of wives is only limited by the means of the husband. Marriage of relations within the degree of first cousins is not allowed. The rule is relaxed with respect to a man marrying the daughter of his father's sister, which is not only allowed, but a custom prevails that the two first daughters of a family may be claimed by the maternal uncle as wives for his sons.[1] It may be noted that the Gujaráti equivalent for "Half a loaf is better than no bread" is "He that hath no other uncle must put up with a squinting uncle." It is the duty of the maternal uncle in Gujarat to conduct the bridegroom to the place appointed for the marriage ceremony.[2] I have previously[3] stated that "the Yerukalas of the Kistna district are divided into two classes—sheep and goats practically. Of these, the latter are the bastard offspring of the former. They are not allowed to marry among the legitimate members. But, in order to prevent their becoming a separate caste, the sons and daughters of a bastard couple are not allowed to marry a bastard. They must marry a legitimate, and so the second generation is clean again." The Collector of the district informs me that legitimate may not marry illegitimate. Illegitimate must marry illegitimate. The offspring thereof is *ex-officio* whitewashed and becomes legitimate, and must marry a legitimate. Writing concerning marriage among the Yerukalas, Dr. Shortt states[4] that "a custom prevails by which the first two daughters of a family may be claimed by the maternal uncle as wives for his sons. The value of a wife is fixed at twenty pagodas. The maternal uncle's right to the first two daughters is valued at eight out of twenty pagodas, and is carried out thus. If he urges his preferential claim, and marries his own sons to his nieces, he pays for each only twelve

[1] 'Manual of the Nellore District.'
[2] M. Macmillan. 'The Globe Trotter in India,' 1895.
[3] Bulletin, Vol. IV, No. 3, p. 154.
[4] 'Trans. Ethn. Soc. N.S.' Vol. VII, p. 187.

pagodas; and similarly if he, from not having sons or any other cause, foregoes his claim, he receives eight pagodas out of the twenty paid to the girl's parents by anybody else who may marry them."

At an Idigar (toddy-drawer) wedding the maternal uncle of the bride bathes, and, going to the place where kalli (Euphorbia) bushes are growing, performs púja to the plant, and cuts a twig with five sub-branches, which is taken to the temple and worshipped. On the wedding day the brother of the bride is fantastically dressed, with margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*) leaves tied to his turban, and carries a bow and arrow. This kodangi (buffoon) is conducted in procession to the temple by a few married women, and made to walk on cloths spread in front of him by the village washerman. On reaching the temple, he and the women worship a vessel placed in a tray along with betel leaves, plantain fruits, and a mirror. The boy, while thus worshipping, is surrounded by a screen, and at the conclusion of the ceremony, goes three times round the vessel and screen. At the close of each revolution, three plantains and sweet cakes are stuck on to the arrow which he carries.

A Coorg bridegroom, mounted on a pony, dismounts at the gate of the bride's residence, which he approaches bare-footed, and advances like a traveller of old on a long journey, with an alpine staff in his hand. When he has advanced within the gate, men hold upright the stems of a plantain tree with the leaves on them. The large broad Coorg war-knife is given into his hand, and he has to cut through a plantain stem with one blow. Three chances are allowed him. It is clear that the possession of physical strength has always been regarded by this race as an essential requisite in a suitor, and the survival of this custom is a safeguard against the premature marriage of children, which prevails elsewhere. The shooting of a tiger is a glorious event in a Coorg man's life. The hero goes through a formal ceremony of marriage with the dead monster.[1] At the Mattupongal festival "towards evening festoons of aloe fibre and cloths containing coins are tied to the horns of bullocks and cows, and the animals are driven through the streets with tom-tom and music. In the villages, especially those inhabited by the Kallans in Madura

[1] T. C. Rice. 'Malabar Quart. Review,' Dec. 1902.

and Tinnevelly, the maiden chooses as her husband him who has safely untied and brought to her the cloth tied to the horn of the fiercest bull. The animals are let loose, with their horns containing valuables, amidst the din of tom-tom and harsh music, which terrifies and bewilders them. They run madly about, and are purposely excited by the crowd. A young Kalla will declare that he will run after such and such a bull—and this is sometimes a risky pursuit—and recover the valuables tied to its horn. The Kalla considers it a great disgrace to be injured while chasing the bull.[1]"

In the marriage ceremony of the Toreyas (Canarese fishermen) of Coimbatore, the bridegroom's sister meets the newly-married couple as they approach the bride's home, and prevents them from proceeding till she has extracted a promise from them that their child shall marry her child. At an Odde wedding, at the same place, when the bridegroom and his party try to enter the bride's house, they are met on the threshold by some of the relatives of the bride, who ask them to sing at least one song before going in.

Among the Kaikólan (weaver caste) musicians of Coimbatore, at least one girl in every family should be set apart for the temple service, and she is instructed in music and dancing. At the táli-tying ceremony she is decorated with jewels, and made to stand on a heap of paddy (unhusked rice). A folded cloth is held before her by two Dásis (dancing girls), who also stand on heaps of paddy. The girl catches hold of the cloth, and her dancing master, who is seated behind her, grasping her legs, moves them up and down in time with the music which is played In the evening she is taken, seated astride a pony, to the temple, where a new cloth for the idol, the táli, and other articles required for doing púja have been got ready. The girl is seated facing the idol, and the officiating Bráhman gives sandal and flowers to her, and ties the táli, which has been lying at the feet of the idol, round her neck. The táli consists of a golden disc and black beads. She continues to learn music and dancing, and the *ars amoris*, and eventually goes through the form of a nuptial ceremony. The relations are invited for an auspicious day, and the maternal uncle, or his representative, ties a golden band on the girl's forehead, and, carrying her, places her on a plank before the assembled guests. A Bráhman priest recites

[1] S. M. Natesa Sastri. 'Hindu Feasts, Fasts, and Ceremonies,' 1903.

mantrams, and prepares the sacred fire (homam). For the actual nuptials a rich Bráhman if possible, and, if not, a Bráhman of more lowly status is invited. A Bráhman is called in as he is next in importance to, and the representative of the idol. As a Dási can never become a widow, the beads in her táli are considered to bring good luck to women who wear them. And some people send the táli required for a marriage to a Dási, who prepares the string for it, and attaches to it black beads from her own táli.

The Jakkulas are, in the Census report, 1901, returned as an inferior class of prostitutes, mostly of the Balija caste. In Tenali, Kistna district, it was customary for each Jakkula family to give up one girl for prostitution. She was "married" to any chance comer for one night with the usual ceremonies. Under the influence of social reform, the members of the caste entered into a written agreement to give up the practice. A family went back on this, so the head of the caste prosecuted them and the "husband" for disposing of a minor for the purpose of prostitution.

Concerning the ceremony of dedication of a girl as a Basivi (dedicated prostitute) in the Bellary district, Mr. F. Fawcett writes as follows.[1] "A táli, on which is depicted the iraman of Vishnu, fastened to a necklace of black beads, is tied round her neck. She is given, by way of insignia, a cane as a wand, carried in the right-hand, and a gopálam or begging basket, which is slung on the left arm." She is then branded with the emblems of the chank and chakra.

Among the Kávarais of Tinnevelly, a custom, which is now dying out, was the wearing by the bridegroom of a dagger called jintadu at the waist. The Vakkaligas of Mysore use a katar or vanki (dagger) during the marriage ceremony. The best man usually carries it in his hand. The bridegroom's sister carries a pot of rice, into which a four-anna piece has been dropped. When the bridegroom goes to the temple, prior to the tying of the táli, he is accompanied by these articles. The dagger, which has a red cloth tied round the blade, must be close to the bridegroom when he comes to the marriage booth. On the third day, when he goes to his father-in-law's house, the dagger must go with him, and is then returned to its owner. Just before the táli is tied, a screen is stretched between the bridal couple, over whom jaggery (molasses) and cummin seeds

[1] 'Journ. Anth. Soc., Bombay,' 1891.

VAKKALIGA BRIDE.

are thrown. The screen is then removed, and the táli and silver bracelets are placed in the bridegroom's hands. The bride places her hands beneath his, and the relations pour milk over the táli. The táli and bracelets are then placed in the bride's hands, and the bridegroom sets his hands beneath hers. The milk-pouring is repeated. The táli is placed on a piece of jaggery, and passed round to be blessed. It is then tied on the bride's neck by the bridegroom.

At a marriage among the Okkiliyans (cultivators) of Coimbatore, the bridegroom carries a katar (dagger) with a lime stuck on the point, wrapped up in a cloth, which he keeps by him until the kanganam (wrist thread) is untied. An Odde bridegroom, when he proceeds to the bride's house, carries a curved knife partly concealed by a cloth. When the táli is tied round the bride's neck, she stoops down, and the bridegroom touches the knot of the táli string thrice with the knife, implying thereby that the knot has been so firmly tied that even a knife cannot cut it. Hence their union will also be strong. At a Toreya marriage, the Bráhman priest ties on the head of both bridegroom an ornament made of gold leaf or tinsel, called mandai-kattu. The bridegroom puts on the sacred thread, and, holding a katar (dagger) in his hand, sits in the wedding booth with a cloth screen surrounding him on all sides. The tying of a bashingam, made of pith or flowers, on the forehead (Pl. II.) during the marriage ceremony is a general custom among the Telugu and Kanarese classes.

Concerning the marriage ceremony of the Tottiyans or Kambalas (Telugu cultivators) of Madura and Tinnevelly: I gather that it is carried out in two temporary huts, one for the bridegroom, the other for the bride. The táli is tied round the bride's neck by an elderly male or female belonging to the family. If the marriage is contracted with a woman of a lower class, the bridegroom's hut is not made use of, and he does not personally take part in the ceremony. A dagger (katar), or rude sword is sent to represent him, and the táli is tied in the presence thereof. In a Zamindári suit some years ago, details of which are published in the Madras Law Reports, Vol. XVII, 1894, the Judge found that "the plaintiff's mother was married to the plaintiff's father in the dagger form; that a dagger is used by the Saptúr Zamindars, who are called Kattari Kamaya, in the case of inequality in the caste or social position of the bride; that, though the customary rites of

the Kumbla caste were also performed, yet the use of the dagger was an essential addition ; and that, though she was of a different and inferior caste to that of the plaintiff's father, yet that did not invalidate the marriage. The defendant's argument was that the dagger was used to represent the Zamindar bridegroom as he did not attend in person, and that, by his non-attendance, there could have been no joining of hands or other essential for constituting a valid marriage. The plaintiff argued that the nuptial rites were duly performed, the Zamindar being present ; that the dagger was there merely as an ornament, and that it was customary for people of the Zamindar's caste to have a dagger paraded on the occasion of marriages. The Judge found that the dagger was there for the purpose of indicating that the two ladies, whom the Zamindar married, were of an inferior caste and rank.

I am informed that, among all the Oriya castes, except Bráhmans, which follow the rule of infant marriage, a girl is married to an arrow, if a suitable husband has not been found for her before she reaches puberty. The actual marriage may take place at any time afterwards.

At a marriage among the Mal Vellálas a live fowl is swung by the head-man round the heads of the bride and bridegroom. Its neck is then wrung, and the dead bird thrown to the attendant clarionet-player. In front of the bridegroom are placed a series of bamboo pans, each containing palmyra jaggery (molasses), cocoanuts, plantains, betel nuts, and four-anna pieces. In one pan are new cloths for the contracting couple, and in the other a spear.

The custom of the bridal couple bathing in water brought from seven different villages, which I have previously referred to as occurring among the Dhobis (washermen), obtains among many Oriya castes, including Bráhmans. It is known by the name of páni-tula. The water is brought by married girls who have not reached puberty on the night preceding the wedding day, and the bride and bridegroom are washed in it before dawn. This bath is called koili-páni-snáno or cuckoo water bath. The koil is the Indian koel or cuckoo (*Eudynamis honorata*) whose crescendo cry of ku-il, ku-il is trying to the nerves in the hot weather.

On the occasion of a marriage among the Oddes of Coimbatore, three female relations of the bridegroom proceed to a white-ant hill, and, after worshipping it by

breaking cocoanuts and burning camphor, fill three baskets with earth from the hill, and carry them to the marriage booth. They then bring from the potter's house three decorated pots and an earthen tray, and place them in the booth. A bit of turmeric with betel leaves is tied to each pot, and they are filled with water. In front of the booth a small platform is made with the ant-earth mixed with water. A wild sugar-cane, twig of *Ficus religiosa*, and of the milk-hedge (*Euphorbia*) are tied together, and planted in the centre of the platform.

At a marriage among the Pallans (agricultural labourers) of Coimbatore, cocoanuts are broken, and offered to a Pillayar (figure of Ganésa) made of cow-dung. The táli is taken round in one of the fragments, to be blessed by those assembled. When a marriage is contemplated among the Idaiyans of the same place, the parents of the prospective bride and bridegroom go to the temple, and throw before the idol a red flower and a white flower, each wrapped in a betel-leaf. A small child is then asked to pick up one of the leaves. If the one selected contains the white flower, it is considered auspicious, and the marriage will be contracted. During the marriage ceremony the officiating Bráhman places a cow-dung Pillayar in the marriage booth. The bride husks some paddy. The relations of the bride and bridegroom fetch from the potter's house seven pots called adukupanai (pots kept one over the other), two large pots called arasanipanai, and seven earthen trays, and place them in front of the mud platform. The pots are filled with water, and a small piece of gold is dropped into each. The pots are worshipped daily during the marriage ceremony.

On the wedding day, among the Iluvans, (toddy-drawers) of Malabar, the bridegroom's face is shaved, and, after being rubbed with oil, he is bathed by seven young men. He is carried, or walks on planks from the bathing-place to the marriage booth, and must not touch the ground with his feet. The barber cuts the nails of an Okkiliyan bride and bridegroom. The barber also, after doing some púja, shaves the face of an Idaiyan bridegroom, and receives as his fee four annas, some rice, and the cloth which the young man was wearing. An Odde may not shave his face till it has been shaved by the barber on his wedding day.

It is the barber, at a marriage among the Konga Vellálas of the Salem district, who officiates at the marriage rites, and

ties the táli. Bráhmans are invited to the wedding, and treated with due respect, and presented with money, rice, betel leaves and nuts. The barber, when he ties the táli, mutters something about Bráhman and Védas in a respectful manner. The story goes that, during the days of the Chéra, Chola, and Pandyan Kings, a Bráhman and an Ambattan (barber) were both invited to a marriage feast. But the Bráhman, on his arrival, died, and the folk, believing his death to be an evil omen, ruled that the Bráhman being missing, they would have the Ambattan; and it has ever since been the custom for the Ambattan to officiate at weddings.[1] The purohits (priests) of the Kallan Muppans of Malabar are Tamil barbers, who officiate at their marriages. The barber shaves the bridegroom before the marriage ceremony, and the purohit has to blow the conch shell all the way from the bridegroom's house to that of the bride.[2]

The milk-post, at a wedding among the Okkiliyans of Coimbatore, is made of the milk-hedge (*Euphorbia Tirucalli*), to which mango leaves and a kanganam (wrist thread) are tied. To the marriage post of the weaver Kaikólans a cloth dipped in turmeric, in which pearls, coral, pieces of gold, and nine kinds of grain are tied up, is fixed. A four-anna piece, wrapped in a cloth, is tied to the milk-post of the Oddes.

At a marriage among the Paraiyans (Pariahs) of Coimbatore, the little finger of the bridegroom's right hand is linked with the little finger of the bride's left hand, the two hands being covered with a cloth. The ends of the cloths of an Okkiliyan bridegroom and bride, with betel leaves and nuts in them, are tied together, and the little fingers of their right hands are linked together.

The mother of a Paraiyan bride, at Coimbatore, places seven rice cakes on the bridegroom's body, viz., on the head, above the shoulders, in the bend of the elbows, and in each hand. She removes all except the one on the head, and re-places them three times, when the cake on the head is removed with the others. A similar ceremony is performed on the bride.

The Toreyan bridegroom places his hands together, and small rice cakes are placed on his body in the following

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[1] C. Hayavadana Rao. [2] C. Karunakara Menon.

GÁNIGA BRIDAL COUPLE.

positions: one on the head, two above the shoulders, two in the bends of the elbows, two in the knees, and four between the fingers. Cakes are, in like manner, placed on the bride's body. At a Toreya wedding cooked rice, white and coloured red, yellow, black, and green, is placed in trays, and waved before the contracting couple. Then nine lighted wicks are placed in a tray, and waved to avert the evil eye. Marriage, among the Toreyans, is always celebrated at the house of the bridegroom, never at that of the bride, as there is a legend that there was once a Rajah belonging to this caste, whose son was taken to the house of his bride-elect, and there murdered.

At an Idaiyan wedding, at Coimbatore, the bridegroom places his right foot, and the bride her left foot on a grindstone, and they look at the star Arundati in the great Bear, which represents the wife of the ascetic Vashista, who is the pattern of chastity. The grindstone represents Ahalliya, who was the wife of a saint, Gauthama. She was cursed by her husband for her misconduct with Indra, and became turned into a stone. By placing their feet on the grindstone, the young couple express a wish to keep in check unchaste desires. The bride decorates a small grindstone with cloths and ornaments, gives it to the bridegroom, and takes it to all the assembled relations, who give her something, and bless her with a hope that she will bring forth many children.

During the wedding ceremony among the Paraiyans of Coimbatore, a pestle is placed in the marriage booth, and the bridegroom sits on it. The bride's father and brothers rub oil over his head, and he is bathed. The bride then sits on the pestle, and is in like manner anointed with oil and bathed. The pestle is then removed, and a plank placed in its stead. A four-anna piece, and a small chank shell (*Turbinella rapa*) such as is used as a baby's pap-bowl, are thrown into a pot containing turmeric water, from which the bride is expected to pick up the shell, and the bridegroom the coin. This is repeated three times, and the kanganams (wrist threads) are then untied, and put into the pot. When an Odde bride and bridegroom enter the bride's house, a pot of water is brought, and they put their hands into it. A ring is dropped into the pot, and they both try to pick it up. Whoever first does so is considered to be the more clever. This is repeated three times. At an Idaiyan wedding, a gold and silver ring are placed in a large pot, and in another pot a style, such as is used for

writing on palm leaves, and a piece of palm leaf are placed. The bride and bridegroom then struggle to catch hold of these objects.

At a marriage among the Iluvans of Malabar, the bridegroom removes seven threads from the new cloth brought for the bride, and makes a string with them, which is coloured yellow with turmeric. To the string he attaches the táli, which he places on betel leaves, and hands over to his sister. During the ceremony the bride stands on rice, and covers her face with betel leaves. To bring good luck to the young couple, a married woman with a child meets them as they approach the bridegroom's house.

During the marriage ceremony among the Oddes of Coimbatore, a woman, belonging to a Pedda (big) Boyan family, puts turmeric water mixed with chunam (burnt lime), betel leaves, and a coral necklet in a vessel, and waves it in front of the bridegroom's face. This is alathi, and is done to avert the evil eye. At the close of the ceremony the bride and bridegroom tie the ends of a single cloth round their bodies, and are bathed in turmeric water, which they pour over each other. They then look at the sky, and, taking water in both hands, throw it down thrice. The kanganams are then untied.

A Kádir (jungle man of the Cochin hills), who intends to marry, goes out of his own village, and lives in another for a whole year, during which period he makes his choice of a wife. At the end of the year he returns to his own village, and obtains permission from the villagers to effect the contemplated union. Then he goes away again to the village of his bride-elect, and gives her a dowry by working there for another year. He then makes presents of cloths and iron tools to the girl's mother, after which follows a feast, which completes the ceremony.

At a wedding among the Lingayats, in the case of a four-day marriage, the first day is spent in worshipping ancestors. On the second day, rice and oil are sent to the local mutt, and oil alone to the relatives. New pots are brought with much shouting, and deposited in the god's room. A booth is erected, and the bridegroom sits under it side by side with a married female relative, and goes through a performance called surige. An enclosure is made round them with cotton thread passed ten times round four earthen pitchers placed at the four corners. Five married women come with

boiled water, and wash off the oil and turmeric, with which the bride and bridegroom and his companion have been anointed. The matrons then clothe them with the new cloths offered to the ancestors on the first day. After some ceremonial, the thread forming the enclosure is removed and given to a Jangam (priest). The surige being now over, the bridegroom and his relative are taken back to the god's room. The bride and one of her relations are now taken to the booth, and another surige is gone through. When this is over, the bride is taken to her room, and decorated with flowers. At the same time the bridegroom is decorated in the god's room, and, mounting on a bullock, goes to the village temple, where he offers a cocoanut. A chaplet of flowers (bashingam) is tied to his forehead, and he returns to the house. In the god's room a pánchakalásam, consisting of five metal vessels, with betel and vibhúti (sacred ashes) has been arranged, one vessel being placed at each corner of a square, and one in the middle. By each kalásam is a cocoanut, a date-fruit, a betel leaf and arecanut, and one pice (copper coin) tied in a handkerchief. A cotton thread is passed round the square, and round the centre kalásam another thread, one end of which is held by the family guru (priest), and the other by the bridegroom, who sits opposite to him. The guru wears a ring made of kusa grass on the big toe of his right foot. The bride sits on the left of the bridegroom, and the guru ties their right and left hands together with kusa grass. The joined hands are washed, and bilva (*Ægle Marmelos*) and flowers are offered. The officiating priest then consecrates the táli and the kanganam; ties the latter on the wrist of the joined hands; and gives the táli to the bridegroom, who ties it round the bride's neck, repeating some words after the priest. On the fourth day the married couple worship Jangams and the elders, and take off the kanganam (consecrated thread) from their wrists, and tie it to the doorway.[1]

At a wedding among the Muhammadan Mappilas (or Moplahs) of Malabar, the bridegroom and his suite are conducted to a room in the bride's house specially prepared for their reception. After a few minutes' stay in the room, the party withdraws, leaving the bridegroom alone. The bride is next introduced into the room by her female relations, and the door is closed by them. The bridegroom and the bride are left together for a few minutes. The bride

[1] 'Madras Museum Bull.' MS.

then leaves, and the bridegroom's party enters, and take him back to his house. In some places the bride and bridegroom are permitted to spend the whole night together, and the latter takes leave only the next morning. In some of the southern táluks (divisions) the custom is the reverse of what has just been described. The bride is first conducted into the room, and persuaded or forced to lie on a sofa, and the bridegroom is next introduced into it, tarries there a few moments, and then leaves. This is practicable only in the case of girls of tender age, who are ignorant of the meaning of what they are made to do.[1]

Among many of the classes which inhabit the plains of Ganjam—Loharas, Tiyóros, Benias, Aruvas, etc.—the younger brother has a claim to marry the widow of an elder brother.

Of marriage among the Arayans (fishing caste) of Travancore the Rev. A. W. Painter writes as follows[2]:—"A curious ceremony prevails, copied, I believe, from the custom of Nairs and Chogans, though differing in several particulars. As soon as the woman attains maturity, relatives and friends are summoned to a feast. The pooshári (priest) having fixed the propitious hour, the girl is brought in, and made to stand on a plank of jack-wood (*Artocarpus integrifolia*), a tree considered sacred by the Arayans. The father's sister then ties the táli around her neck. The feast is then partaken of, and the ceremony is considered complete."

At a wedding among the Mal Arayans the bridegroom and bride sit and eat from the same plantain leaf, after which the táli is tied. The bride then seizes any ornament or cooking vessel in the house, saying that it is her father's. The bridegroom snatches it from her, and the marriage rite is concluded.[3]

The father of a would-be bridegroom among the Malaiális of the Yelagiri hills, Salem district, when he hears of the existence of a suitable bride, repairs to her village with some of his relations, and seeks out the Úr-Goundan or headman, between whom and the visitors mutual embraces are exchanged. The object of the visit is explained, and the father says that he will abide by the "voice of four" in the

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[1] P. Kunjain. 'Malabar Quart. Review,' Vol. II, No. 1, 1903.
[2] 'Journ. Anthrop. Soc., Bombay,' Vol. II.
[3] 'Travancore Census Report,' 1901.

matter. If the match is fixed up, he gives a feast in honour of the event. When the visitors enter the future bride's house, the eldest daughter-in-law of the house appears on the threshold, and takes charge of the walking-stick of each person who goes in. She then, with some specially prepared sandal paste, makes a circular mark on the foreheads of the guests, and retires. The feast then takes place, and, before the party retire, the daughter-in-law again appears, and returns the walking sticks. It is said that, even if the number thereof is more than fifty, she, like an American lift-boy who remembers the number of all the lodgers in a hotel, always hands over the sticks to their owners.[1]

Concerning the Kammálans (artisans) of Malabar Mr. S. Appadorai Iyer writes that as with the Nayárs, the táli-kettu kalyánam has to be celebrated. For this the parents of the child have to find a suitable manaválan or bridegroom by the consultation of horoscopes. An auspicious day is fixed, and new cloths are given to the manaválan. The girl bathes, and puts on new clothes. The bride and bridegroom are brought to the marriage booth, where the táli-tying ceremony takes place. This concluded, the bridegroom takes a thread from the new cloth, and breaks it in two, saying that his union with the girl has ceased. He then walks away without looking back.

With the Iluvans of Malabar the veetil kettu corresponds to the táli-kettu ceremony of other castes. The girl is bathed by seven maidens, and made to stand on a plank. The boy's sister then ties the táli round her neck. The maidens husk a measure of paddy, and they and the girl eat it. On the fourth day the girl is taken to a tank, and bathed. Flowers and three lighted wicks are placed on a raft made of a plantain stem, and floated on the water while she bathes. On her return from the tank, she is given a little jaggery and cocoanut to eat. The girl's father asks the boy's people that the marriage tie should be severed. Her mother, or one of her female relations, takes a thread from her cloth, and, saying that the girl and boy are separated, puts it in a vessel containing cooked rice. This vessel, and two other vessels containing curry and other food-stuffs, are sent to the boy's house. The girl is no longer his wife, and may be married to any one else. If a girl is to be married before the veetil kettu has been performed, the sister of the

[1] C. Hayavadana Rao. MS.

bridegroom-elect carries a new cloth as a present from him to the bride's house. Instead of the táli, a gold ring is tied on the girl's neck. The remaining ceremonies are as at any ordinary wedding. This form of marriage is called kannannee.

It is stated in a recent article [1] that among the Konars (cowherds) of Poondurai near Erode, in the Tamil country, who, according to tradition, originally belonged to the same tribe as the Gopas living in the southern part of Kerala and now forming a section of Nayars, the former matrimonial customs were exactly the same as those of the Nayars. They, too, celebrated kettukaliánam, and, like the Nayars, did not make it binding on the bride and bridegroom of the ceremony to live as husband and wife. They have now, however, abandoned the custom, and have made the tying of the táli the actual marriage ceremony.

As bearing on the subject of polyandry among the Nayars, I may quote the following passage from Ellis' Kural:—"On the continent of India polyandry is still said to be practised in Orissa, and among particular tribes in other parts. In Malayálam, as is well known, the vision of Plato in his ideal republic is more completely realised. The women among the Náyars not being restricted to family or number, but, after she has been consecrated by the usual rites before the nuptial fire, in which ceremony any indifferent person may officiate as the representative of her husband, being in her intercourse with the other sex only restrained by her inclinations; provided that the male with whom she associates be of an equal or superior tribe. But it must be stated, for the glory of the female character, that, notwithstanding the latitude thus given to the Náyattis, and that they are thus left to the guidance of their own free will and the play of their own fancy (which in other countries has not always been found the most efficient check on the conduct of either sex), it rarely happens that they cohabit with more than one person at the same time. Whenever the existing connexion is broken, whether from incompatibility of temper, disgust, caprice, or any of the thousand vexations by which, from the frailty of nature, domestic happiness is liable to be disturbed, the woman seeks another lover, the man another mistress. But it mostly happens that the bond of joint paternity is here, as elsewhere, too strong to be shaken off;

[1] K. Kannan Nayar. 'Malabar Quart. Review,' 1903.

and that the uninfluenced and uninterested union of love, when formed in youth, continues even in the decline of age." Of the paternal form of polyandry (adelphogamy) in Malabar, Bartolomeo writes [1] that "on the coast of Malabar a custom prevails, in the cast to which the braziers belong, that the eldest brother alone marries; but the rest, when he is absent, supply his place with their sister-in-law."

A form of marriage, known as the Sarvaswadanam marriage, is still in force among the Nambudri Bráhmans, the formula used during the marriage being the following text from Vashista:— "I give unto the this virgin (who has no brother) decked with ornaments, and the son who may be born of her shall be my son." This form of marriage is not recognised in the Mitakshara, which in such matters governs almost the whole of India at the present day. Similarly, the adoption of a son in the Dwayamushayana form, *i.e.*, as the son of two fathers (the natural and adoptive) is the ordinary form of adoption recognised in Malabar, while in countries governed by the Mitakshara law it is considered as obsolete.[2]

EDGAR THURSTON.

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[1] 'Voyage to the East Indies,' 1776-89.

[2] Mr. Justice K. Narayana Marar. 'Malabar Quart. Review,' Vol. I, 1902.

HOOK-SWINGING.

In summing up a series of reports on the swinging festival, the Government of Madras, in 1854, expressed the opinion that it "is on the whole less frequently observed now than formerly. In some few districts the practice is as prevalent as ever; in the majority, however, it is on the decline, while in none can it be called general. Further it does not seem to be in any way connected with the religion of the observers, but to be performed in fulfilment of vows. In some cases it would appear that the observance has led to loss of life. This would, of course, justify the interference of the magistracy, and, in future, any occurrence of this nature should lead to the prohibition of the ceremony at the village where it happened. The best method of discouraging this objectionable practice must be left to the discretion of the different magistrates, but the Governor in council feels confident that, if it be properly explained that the object of Government is not to interfere with any religious observance of its subjects, but to abolish a cruel and revolting practice, the efforts of the magistracy will be willingly seconded by the influence of the great mass of the community, and more particularly of the wealthy and intelligent classes who do not seem to countenance or support the swinging ceremony."

From the Government records (1854) the following details are culled[1]:—

In 1852 two men were killed during the celebration of the festival in the Salem district, in consequence of the pole from which they were suspended having accidentally snapped. In the Tanjore district the festival was known to have been practised in former years in a hundred and twenty-five towns and villages, and still took place occasionally in seventy-eight places. In the Nellore district swinging festival of the following natures were observed either annually or at intervals of two to thirty years:—

1. Gaulaupooseedy, *i.e.*, a man hung to the end of a cross beam fixed on a post by the skin, etc., of his back with iron hooks.

[1] Reports on the swinging festival and the ceremony of walking through fire, 1854.

HUMAN HOOK-SWINGING.

2. Gumpaseedy, *i.e.*, a man sitting in a basket or on a plank hung to the end of the iron-beam thereof.

3. Pucaseedy, *i.e.*, iron hooks fixed in the sides of a man who has to walk round a pagoda.

4. Tallaseedy, *i.e.*, a man hung to a post by a rope tied to his waist.

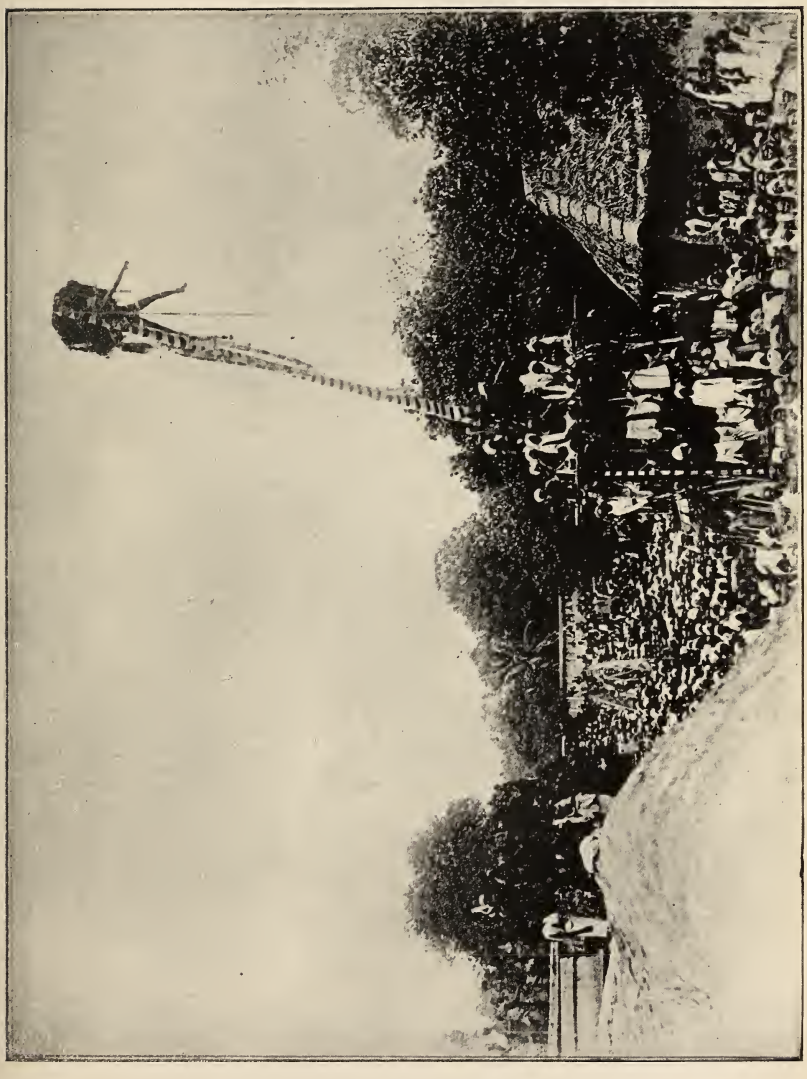
In the Kistna district there had been no swinging for several years, but the custom was reintroduced by an old pensioned Hindu Subadar. It appeared that his father's sister performed suttee 70 or 80 years since, and a temple was erected to her memory on the site of her immolation, and in commemoration of the event a swinging festival was held annually. This had ceased for many years until the return of the old subadar, when, out of respect to the memory of his relative, he restored the temple, and re-established the swinging festival at his own expense. The Pariahs were, it is stated, the principal performers at the village swinging ceremonials, and they received from one to four rupees from a general fund subscribed by the villagers or granted for the purpose by some public-spirited individual. In one report it is mentioned that, on the party who had been accustomed to pay the swingers having left, the villagers, afraid lest a discontinuance of the practice should be productive of calamity, took to swinging sheep and pumpkins, a much more reasonable exhibition of devotion. In cases of famine, cholera, or other calamity, a swinging festival was held for the purpose of propitiating the deity, and, at the same time, a slaughter of goats, sheep, pigs, fowls, and even male buffaloes took place. In the Canara district, on the occasion of a very extensive celebration, the swinging was combined with an extensive slaughter of animals. The pole was erected in the close vicinity of a high heap of reeking heads. All the men, women and children were in holiday attire, and hundreds of the latter were brought close to the heap of heads, and showed intense excitement and enjoyment in witnessing the struggles of the dying animals or in hearing their shrieks.

In front of the Máriyamma temple at Múdabidure in South Canara stands a quadrangular stone, which is hollowed out at the top. It was formerly used as a receptacle for a wooden beam, on which another beam was made to revolve at the hook-swinging festival. The necessary wooden

implements are still preserved near the temple.[1] The apparatus for hook swinging still lies outside the Periyapalayam temple near Madras. Of this barbarous ceremony, as carried out at the latter end of the eighteenth century, an interesting account is given by Sonnerat,[2] who thus describes it:—"Those who imagine they have received great benefits from Mariatale, or wish to obtain them, make a vow to suspend themselves in the air. This ceremony consists in passing two iron tenter-hooks, tied to the end of a very long lever, through the skin of the votary's back. This lever is placed at the top of a mast twenty feet high. As soon as the votary is hung on the hooks, they press the other end of the lever, and lift him up in the air. In this state they turn him round as often as he chuses. He commonly has a sword and shield in his hands; and makes the motions of a man who is fighting. He must appear chearful, whatever pain he may feel: for, if tears escape him, he is driven from his cast, but this seldom happens. The votary who is to be hung up drinks some intoxicating liquor, which makes him almost insensible, and looks upon this dangerous preparation as a pastime. After turning him several times round, they take him off, and he is soon cured of his wounds. The quickness of the cure passes for a miracle in the eyes of the zealots of this goddess. The Bráhmans do not assist at this ceremony, which they despise. The worshippers of Mariatale are of the lowest casts."

In the early part of the last century Mr. Elijah Hoole was present as an eye-witness of a hook-swinging ceremony at Royapettah in the city of Madras, of which he gave the following graphic description[3] "A pole, thirty or forty feet high, was planted in the ground perpendicularly, having an iron pivot on the top, on which rested the middle of an horizontal yard or cross pole, which might also be about forty feet in length. This latter was managed by a rope attached to one end, reaching down to the ground, by means of which it could be made to turn upon the centre as fast as the people could run. Near the other end of the cross-pole, attached to a short rope, were two bright iron hooks, and at the extreme end was a short rope, about the length of that to which the hooks were attached. By slackening the

[1] E. Hultzsch, Government Epigraphist. 'Annual Report,' 1900–01.
[2] 'Voyage to the East Indies and China,' 1774 and 1781.
[3] 'Personal narrative of a mission to the South of India,' 1820 to 1828.



HUMAN HOOK-SWINGING.

rope for the management of the cross pole, the other end, to which the hooks were attached, was lowered to a platform higher than the heads of the assembled multitude, from whence, when it was raised, was borne into the mid-air a man, with no other dress than a waist cloth, and supported only by the muscles and flesh of the middle of the back, into which were thrust the iron hooks. When the cross pole, thus laden, had regained its horizontal position, it was turned quickly on the pivot, by the persons holding the rope at the other end moving round with it at a good pace. It was impossible to look at the deluded votary of superstition thus painfully suspended without a sickening horror, not merely from an idea of the agonies endured by him, but also from a fear lest the flesh should tear by his weight, and that, falling from a height which would ensure his destruction, he should, by death, complete the sacrifice thus offered to the infernal gods. The rising of the flesh taken up by the hooks seemed to threaten such a catastrophe, and the short rope at the extremity of the pole, being within reach of the person suspended, was perhaps intended to afford, in such a case, some chance of safety. Some of the persons thus suspended appeared fearful of falling, and held constantly by the rope, or, by this means, they perhaps hoped to relieve themselves of some degree of the pain which must be endured. Others, more bold and hardy, made no use of the rope, and, as though happy as well as fearless, thrust their hands into their cloth, and, taking out a profusion of flowers, provided for the occasion, showered then abroad amongst the people, who struggled to catch and preserve them as though they had been blessings from heaven. One fellow, by way of additional bravado, fired a pistol, which he had stuck in his waist for the purpose. I never pressed through the assembled crowds near enough to see the hooks put into the flesh, but was told that the only means used to deaden the pain was a smart blow, given with the open hand, on that side of the back into which the hook was to be inserted. From the indifference with which they mingled with the crowd after the ceremony, and the smallness of the streams of blood I have seen trickling from the wounds, I should suppose that a less quantity of blood than would be imagined is lost by the devotees. I think I have seen five or six persons swing in one day. Swinging is neither practised nor sanctioned by the Bráhmans ; at least they have disavowed it to me ; and I never observed any besides the lower classes of the Hindoos conducting or participating in the ceremony.

It is said to be observed in consequence of vows made in time of sickness or danger, or for the obtaining of children or some other desired object.

Of the ceremony as performed in recent years at the Kollangodu temple in Travancore, an excellent account is given by the Rev. T. Knowles,[1] from which the following précis has been compiled :—

In front of the temple was a booth containing the image of the goddess Bhadra Káli, a cruel deity, who is supposed to delight in blood at a little distance was the car. The bottom part of this was very much like a lorry used when transporting large logs of timber by means of elephants. There were four solid wheels of thick timber, with a framework, like a railway waggon on a small scale. To this were attached two thick cable ropes. Joined to the sides of the car were two upright posts, about 15 feet high, strengthened with stays and cross-pieces. On the top was a piece of thick timber with a pole in it, and the bottom rounded, which fitted into a cross-piece, and allowed the long beam on which the men were swung to move up or down. This beam was some 35 or 40 feet long, and about 9 inches in diameter. It was placed through the pole in the piece of timber on the top of the upright frame, and balanced in the middle like a huge see-saw. At one end of the pole was a covered canopy, and at the other long ropes were fastened, which trailed on the ground. The whole arrangement of the car was such that, by lowering one end of the long beam to the ground, and fastening a man to it, and then pulling down the other end by the ropes, the man could be raised into the air a height of some 40 feet or more. The whole car could then be dragged by the thick cable ropes round the temple.

While the subject was being prepared for swinging, a mat was stretched above his head, partly to do him honour, partly to protect him from the sun. His head and neck were richly ornamented, and below he was bedecked with peacock's feathers, and clad in a loin-cloth, which would bear some, if not all the weight of his body. Amid the firing of mortars, beating of tom-toms, the screeching of flutes, and the shouts of the crowd, the canopied end of the long beam was lowered, and the devotee, lying prone on the ground, was fastened to the beam by means of ropes passing

[1] 'Wide World Magazine,' September 1899.

PSEUDO HOOK-SWINGING.

under his arms and around his chest. To some of the ropes hooks were fastened. The priests took hold of the fleshy part of the man's back, squeezed up the flesh, and put some four hooks at least through it. A rudely fashioned sword and shield were then given to the man, and he was swung up into the air, waving the sword and shield, and making convulsive movements. Slowly the people dragged the car round the temple, a distance not quite as far as round St. Paul's cathedral. Some of the men were suspended while the car was dragged round three or four times.

The next devotee was fastened in the same way to the beam, but, instead of a sword and shield, the priests gave him an infant in his arms, and devotee and infant were swung up in the air, and the car dragged round the temple as before.

Some children were brought forward, whose parents had made vows about them. The little ones were made to prostrate themselves before the image of Káli. Then the fleshy parts of their sides were pinched up, and some wires put through. This done, the wires were placed in the hands of the relatives, and the children were led round and round the temple, as though in leading strings.

At Madura, Mr. Knowles states, on the occasion of a hook-swinging festival a few years ago, the devotee was swung by hooks alone, and not by ropes and hooks. The pole was longer than that used at Kollangodu, and decorated with coloured cloth something like a barber's pole, and garlanded with flowers. Instead of it being fixed on a car, a large platform was used. The fleshy part of the man's back was first beaten to cause it to swell, and two large hooks were fastened into the flesh.

The Abbé Dubois,[1] in describing the hook swinging ceremony, says that "a priest beats the fleshy part of the back until it is quite benumbed. While suspended the devotee is careful not to show any sign of pain; indeed he continues to laugh, jest, and gesticulate, like a buffoon in order to amuse the spectators, who applaud and shout with laughter. After swinging in the air for the prescribed time, the victim is let down, and, as soon as his wounds are dressed, he returns home in triumph."

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[1] 'Hindu Manners, Customs, and Ceremonies.'

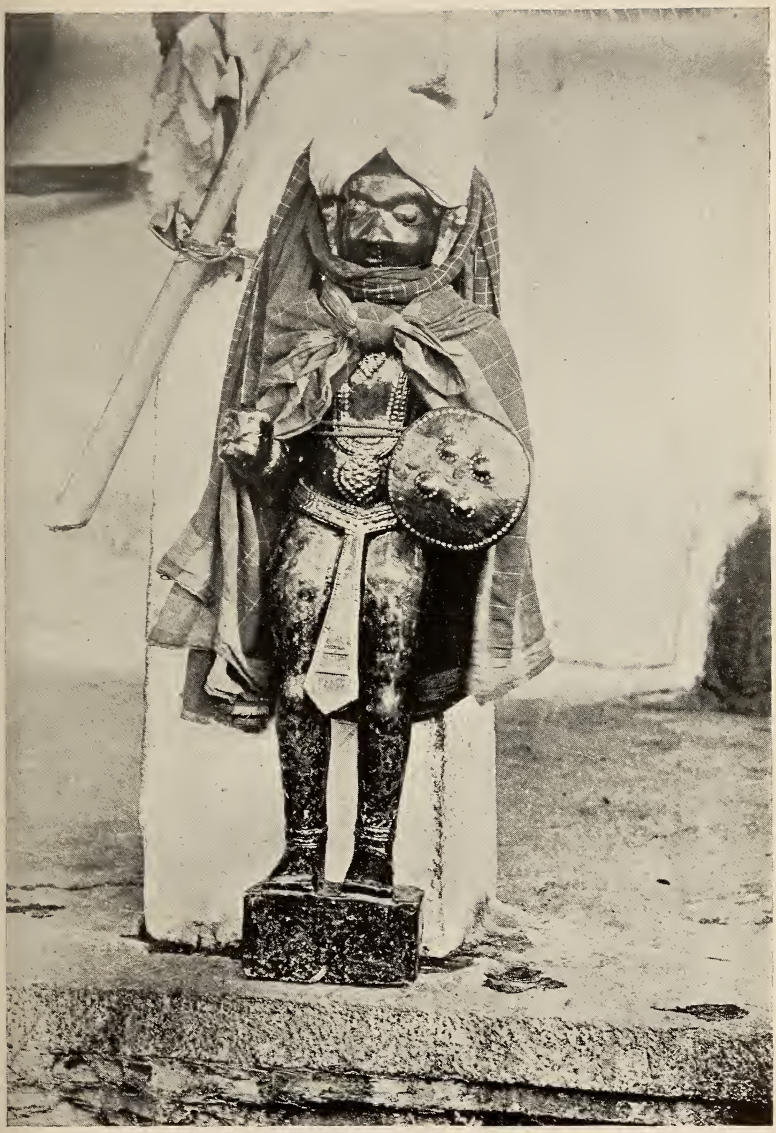
Some years ago, a man in a village north of the Gódávari river, who had four holes in his loins from previous swingings, complained to the Deputy Commissioner that his occupation was gone, as he was no longer allowed to be swung.

Last year the Governor of Madras was approached by a ryat (agriculturist) on behalf of the community with a request for permission to revive the practice of hook-swinging in a certain village of the Madura district. He represented, with all earnestness, that, since this ceremony had been stopped, the rainfall had been deficient and the crops scanty; cholera had been prevalent; and in families where there were five or six children ten years ago, there were now only two or three.

A ceremony which is closely allied to hook-swinging is the tookum (lifting), which takes place during the kumbhum kodum or pot festival in Travancore, for the following account of which I am indebted to the 'Madras Mail', 1902:—

On a wooden platform is an upright frame, on which is a transverse bar, both ends of which can be raised or lowered at will. Facing the temple there were three such platforms, and each of them was occupied by a man who performed the tookum ceremony. He was fitted with a head gear resembling an old poke-bonnet. From the rim were suspended slender threads of coloured beads and tinsel. On his shoulders rested a pair of wooden epaulettes, which looked gilded. His costume was turkey red and black, and from the waist downwards he was covered with a skirt of peacock's feathers. Under his arms ran a leather band, by which, when the transverse bar was raised, he hung in mid-air. Behind the band were two steel hooks, which pierced the skin very slightly. In his hands each man held a bow and what seemed to be an arrow, and from time to time he shouted and gesticulated in an alarming manner. There was a distinct military air about the dress and demeanour of the men.

As human hook-swinging is forbidden, a pseudo-ceremony has been substituted for it, and was recently performed for my special edification at Chennapatna in the Mysore province. The nature of the apparatus which is erected for the occasion, and decorated with coloured cloths, flags, and leafy twigs of the mango tree, is rendered clear by



SIDI VÍRANNA.

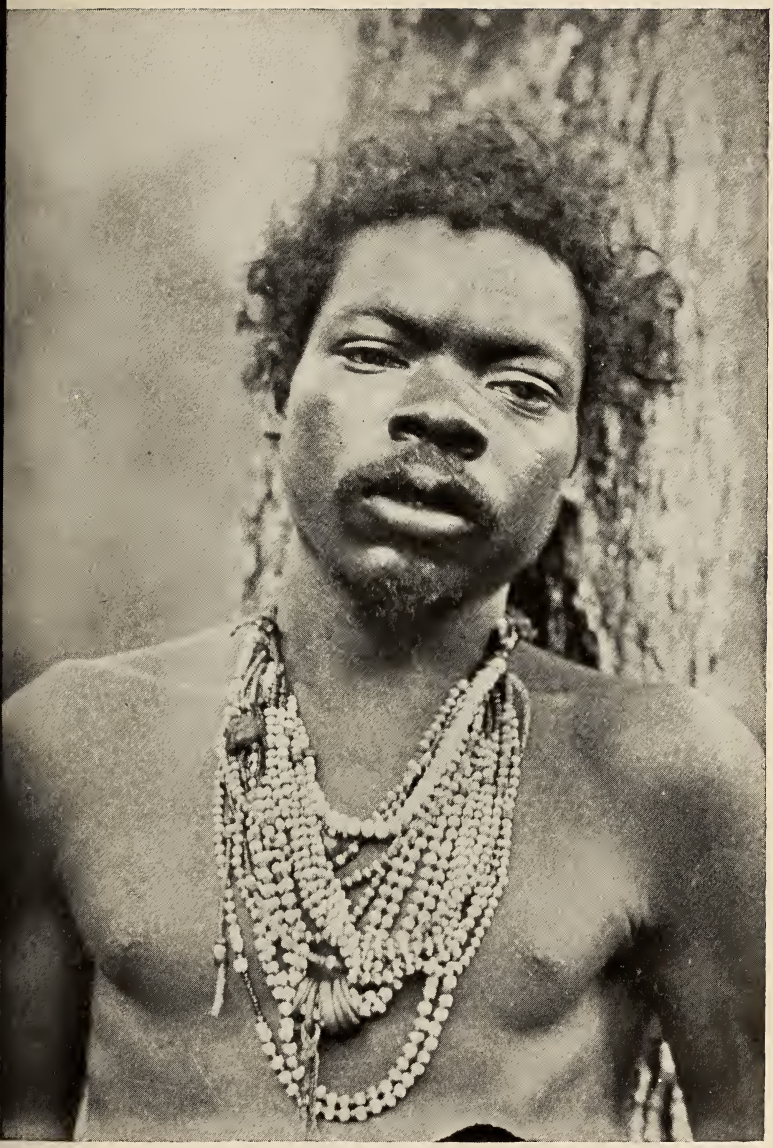
reference to plate VI which shows Sidi Víranna suspended on high, and Máriamma in her shrine carried above its bearer's head. To the top of the framework a brass umbrella and kalásam (brass pot) are affixed. The end of the beam to which the figure of Sidi Víranna (Pl. VII) is suspended is adorned with a canopy with mango leaves tied to it. The goddess Máriamma in her shrine, borne by a pujári, and Sidi Víranna carried by a boy, are conducted to a tank (pond), where they are worshipped, and brought in procession to the scene of the swinging ceremony. To a long beam, which is lowered to the ground, Sidi Víranna, carrying in his hands a sword and shield, and dressed up in a gaudy turban and silk-bordered cloth, is secured by means of a rope made of human hair, which is tied to a hook in the middle of his back. The beam is then hoisted on high, and Sidi Víranna rotated round and round, accompanied by the goddess Máriamma, and Holeya musicians playing weird music will fife and drum. Sometimes a cradle is tied to the beam beneath the canopy, and children are placed in it. And occasionally men, tied to the beam by ropes passed round the waist, are hoisted. The festival usually commences on a Tuesday, and lasts for three days. On the first day the goddess Máriamma is worshipped by Bráhmans only, and on the following day by other castes, who make offerings of fowls and sheep. The swinging of the god is carried on for several hours. At its conclusion, the goddess is taken in procession through the streets, and when the temple is reached, a fire-walking ceremony, called konda, takes place. Over the hot embers strewn in front of the temple, the pujári, with the goddess, walks three times, and enters the temple. It is said that he receives no injury to his feet if he fasts and keeps himself pure on the day of the ordeal.

I am indebted to Messrs. Wiele and Klein for the photographs illustrating the human hook-swinging ceremony.

E. T.

PALIYANS.

In a note on the Malai (hill) Paliyans of the Madura district, the Rev. J. E. Tracy writes as follows :—"I went to their village at the foot of the Periyar hills, and can testify to their being the most, abject, hopeless, and unpromising specimens of humanity that I have ever seen. There were about forty of them in the little settlement, which was situated in a lovely spot. A stream of pure water was flowing within a few feet of their grass huts, and yet they were as foul and filthy in their personal appearance as if they were mere animals, and very unclean ones. Rich land that produced a luxuriant crop of rank weeds was all around them, and, with a little exertion on their part, might have been abundantly irrigated, and produced continuous crops of grain. Yet they lived entirely on nuts and roots, and various kinds of gum that they gathered in the forest on the slopes of the hills above their settlement. Only two of the community had ever been more than seven miles away from their village into the open country below them. Their huts were built entirely of grass, and consisted of only one room each, and that open at the ends. The chief man of the community was an old man with white hair. His distinctive privilege was that he was allowed to sleep between two fires at night, while no-one else was allowed to have but one—a distinction that they were very complaisant about, perhaps because with the distinction was the accompanying obligation to see that the community's fire never went out. As he was also the only man in the community who was allowed to have two wives, I inferred that he delegated to them the privilege of looking after the fires, while he did the sleeping, whereas, in other families, the man and wife had to take turn and turn about, to see that the fire had not to be re-lighted in the morning. They were as ignorant as they were filthy. They had no place of worship, but seemed to agree that the demons of the forest around them were the only beings that they had to fear besides the Forest department. They were barely clothed, their rags being held about them, in one or two cases, with girdles of twisted grass. They had much the same appearance that many a famine subject presented in the famine of 1877, but they seemed to have had no better times to look back upon, and hence took their condition as a matter of course. The



PULIYAN.

forest had been their home from time immemorial. Yet the forest seemed to have taught them nothing more than it might have been supposed to have taught the prowling jackal or the laughing hyæna. There were no domesticated animals about their place : strange to say, not even a pariah dog. They appeared to have no idea of hunting, any more than they had of agriculture. And, as for any ideas of the beauty or solemnity of the place that they had selected for their village site, they were as innocent of such things as they were of the beauties of Robert Browning's verse."

Writing concerning the Paliyans who live on the Travancore frontier near the township of Shenkotta. Mr. G. F. D'Penha states [1] that they account for their origin by saying that, at some very remote period, an Eluvan took refuge during a famine in the hills, and there took to wife a Palliyar woman, and that the Palliyars are descendants from these two. "The Palliyar" Mr. Da Penha continues, "is just a shade lower than the Eluvans. He is permitted to enter the houses of Eluvans, Elavanians (betel-growers) and even of Maravars, and in the hills, where the rigour of the social code is relaxed to suit circumstances, the higher castes mentioned will even drink water given by Palliyars, and eat roots cooked by them. The Palliyars regard sylvan deities with great veneration. Kurupuswámi is the tribe's tutelary god, and, when a great haul of wild honey is made, offerings are given at some shrine. They pretend to be followers of Siva, and always attend the Adi Amavasai ceremonies at Courtallum. The Palliyar cultivates nothing, not even a sweet potato : he keeps no animal except a stray dog or two. An axe, a knife, and a pot are all the impediments he carries. An expert honey-hunter, he will risk his neck climbing lofty trees or precipitous cliffs. A species of sago palm furnishes him with a glairy glutinous fluid on which he thrives, and such small animals as the iguana (*Varanus*), the tortoise, and the larvæ of hives are never-failing luxuries."

The Paliyans, whom I have investigated in North Tinnevelly, were living, in the jungles near the base of the mountains, in small isolated communities separated from each other by a distance of several miles. They speak Tamil with a peculiar intonation, which recalls to mind the

[1] 'Ind. Antiquary,' Vol. XXX, 1902.

Irulas and Paniyans. They are wholly illiterate, and only a few can count up to ten. A woman has been known to forget her own name. At a marriage the father, taking the hand of the girl, and putting it in that of the bridegroom, says: "I give this girl to you. Give her roots and leaves, and protect her." The value of a bride or bridegroom depends very much on the quantity of roots, etc., which he or she can collect. When a widow does not remarry, the males of the community supply her with roots and other products of the jungle. Marriages are, as a rule, contracted within the settlement, and complications occasionally occur owing to the absence of a girl of suitable age for a young man. Indeed, in one settlement I came across two brothers, who had for this reason resorted to the adelphous form of polyandry. It would be interesting to note hereafter if this custom, thus casually introduced, becomes established in the tribe. As an exception to the rule of marriage within the settlement, it was noted that a party of Paliyans had wandered from the Gandamanaikanúr forests to the jungle of Ayanarkoil, and there intermarried with members of the local tribe, with which they became incorporated. A case was narrated to me, in which a Maravar cohabited for some time with a Paliyan woman, who bore children by him. In this way is the purity of type among the jungle tribes diminishing as the result of civilisation, and their nasal index reduced from platyrhine to mesorhine dimensions.

As they carry no pollution, they are sometimes employed, in return for food, as night watchmen at the Vaishnavite temple known as Azhagar koil at the base of the hills. They collect for the Forest department minor produce in the form of root-bark of *Ventilago madraspatana* and *Anisochilus carnosus*, the fruit of *Terminalia Chebula* (myrabolans), honey, bee's-wax, etc., which are handed over to a contractor in exchange for rice, tobacco, betel-leaves and nuts, chillies, tamarinds and salt. The food thus earned as wages is supplemented by yams and roots, which are dug up with a digging stick, and forest fruits. The contractor they implicitly obey, and it was mainly through his influence that I was enabled to interview them, and measure their bodies, in return for a banquet, whereof they partook seated on the grass in two semicircles, the men in front and women in the rear, and eating off teak-leaf plates piled high with rice. Though the prodigious mass of food provided was greedily devoured till considerable abdominal distension was visible,

PULIYAN.

dissatisfaction was expressed because it consisted of vegetable curry with no mutton, and I had not brought new loincloths for them. They laughed, however, when I expressed a hope that they would abandon their dirty cloths, turkey-red turbans and European bead necklaces, and revert to the primitive leafy garment of their forbears. A struggle ensued for the limited supply of sandal paste, with which a group of men smeared their bodies, in imitation of the higher classes, when they were about to be photographed. A feast given to the Pulaiyans by some missionaries was marred at the outset by the unfortunate circumstance that betel and tobacco were placed by the side of the food, these articles being of evil omen as they are placed in the grave with the dead.

A question whether they eat beef produced marked displeasure, and even roused an apathetic old woman to grunt "Your other questions are fair. You have no right to ask that." If a Paliyan happens to come across the carcase of a cow or buffalo near a stream, it is abandoned, and not approached for a long time. Leather they absolutely refuse to touch, and one of them declined to carry my camera box because he detected that it had a leather strap.

They make fire with a quartz strike-a-light and steel, and the floss of *Bombax malabaricum* (silk-cotton tree). They have no means of catching or killing animals, birds, or fish with nets, traps, or weapons, but, if they come across the carcase of a goat or deer in the forest, they will roast and eat it. They catch "vermin" (presumably field rats) by smoking them out of their holes, or digging them out with digging sticks made of hard wood. Crabs are caught for eating by children, by letting a string with a piece of cloth tied to the end down the hole, and lifting it out thereof when the crab seizes hold of the cloth with its claws. Of wild beasts they are not afraid, and scare them away by screaming, clapping the hands, and rolling stones down into the valleys. I saw one man, who had been badly mauled by a tiger on the buttock and thigh when he was asleep with his wife and child in a cave. During the dry season they live in natural caves and crevices in rocks, but, if these leak during the rains, they erect a rough shed with the floor raised on poles off the floor and sloping grass roof, beneath which a fire is kept burning at night, not only for warmth but also to keep off wild beasts. They are expert

at making rapidly improvised shelters at the base of hollow trees by cutting away the wood on one side with an axe. Thus protected, they were quite snug and happy during a heavy shower, while we were miserable amid the drippings from an umbrella and a mango tree.

Savari (a corruption of Xavier) is a common name among them. There is a temple called Savarimalayan (Xavier of the hills) on the Travancore boundary, whereat the festival takes place at the same time as the festival in honour of St. Xavier among Roman Catholics.

The women are very timid in the presence of Europeans, and suffer further from hippophobia, the sight of a horse, which they say is as tall as a mountain like an elephant, producing a regular stampede into the depths of the jungle. They carry their babies slung in a cloth on the back, and not astride the hips according to the common practice of the plains. The position, in confinement, is to sit on a rock with legs dependent.

Many of them suffer from jungle fever, as a protection against which they wear a piece of turmeric tied round the neck. The dead are buried, and a stone is placed on the grave, which is never re-visited.

The men, in walking, stride with long steps and a tiger-like swing from the hips.

Their calves are thin, and their chests narrow.

The measurements of the men examined by me were as follows :—

	Maximum. cm.	Minimum. cm.	Average. cm.
Stature	159·6	13·5	150·9
Mid-finger to patella	11·8	6·	8·4
Cephalic length	18·4	17·1	17·8
Cephalic breadth	14·6	13·	13·5
Cephalic index	79·1	72·8	75·7
Nasal height	4·8	3·8	4·2
Nasal breadth	4·	3·1	3·5
Nasal index	100·2	70·8	82·9

Like other primitive tribes of Southern India, the Paliyans are short of stature and dolichocephalic, and the archaic type of nose persists in some individuals (Pls. VIII and IX).

E. T.

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ANTHROPOLOGY.

THE PARAIYAN, AND THE LEGEND OF NANDAN, BY THE REV. A. C. CLAYTON; SOME AGRICULTURAL CEREMONIES IN MALABAR, BY C. KARUNAKARA MENON.

With Four Plates.

MADRAS:
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1906.

THE PARAIYAN.

CONTENTS.

THE PARAIYAN.

BY THE REV. A. C. CLAYTON,

Wesleyan Missionary.

1. It is the aim of this essay to put in order some facts about the Paraiyans, which I have learned in almost daily intercourse with them since 1892. If the meagreness of these notes is criticised, I can only plead that, so far as I know, this is the first attempt to give a general account of this people, and that it has been very difficult to gather any but partial information from them or about them.

I am indebted to many missionaries and missionary workers for occasional information, and also to the following books :—

Baines : General Report on the Census of India, 1891.
Francis : Report on the Census of India, 1901 (Madras Presidency).
Jensen : Tamil Proverbs.
Oppert : On the Original Inhabitants of Bharatavarsa.
Padfield : The Hindu at Home.
Stuart : Report on the Census of India, 1891 (Madras Presidency)

For the statements enclosed in square brackets I am indebted to Mr. K. Rangachari of the Madras Museum.

2. *Plan.*—The general outline of this paper is the same as that of the series of questions prepared by Mr. Thurston in connection with the Ethnographic Survey of the Madras Presidency, part of the Ethnographic Survey of India. The table of contents will show the more important headings, under which the facts given are arranged. The index will enable readers to find such matters as are not clearly indicated by the headings of the sections.

3. *The name Paraiyan.*—The anglicised term 'Pariah' is ordinarily applied to all the lowest classes of field-labourers, and indeed to most day labourers in the Madras Presidency. Leather-workers, cobblers, weavers of grass-mats, the hunting castes, and all the miscellaneous folk who are neither Musalmāns, nor included in the regular social

system of Hinduism, are often carelessly referred to by this name. But Hindus do not speak in this indiscriminate fashion; by 'Pariah' they mean only the special Dravidian tribes called, in Tamil, *Paraiyan* (பறையன்) and, in Telugu, *Māla* (మాల). To avoid any confusion, the word '*Paraiyan*' will be used throughout this paper, to designate the Tamil section of the 'Pariah' class that calls itself, and is called in Tamil, *Paraiyan;* and my statements will refer to them only. The late Dr. Caldwell, an acknowledged authority on all subjects connected with Tamil antiquities, derived the name Paraiyan from the Tamil word *parai* (பறை) a drum, as certain Paraiyans act as drummers at funerals, marriages, village festivals, and on all occasions when government or communal announcements are proclaimed. (Census of India Report, 1891, vol. xiii, p. 244.) Mr. H. A. Stuart, in his Report on the Madras Census of 1891, seems to question this derivation, remarking that it seems in the highest degree improbable that a large community should owe its name to an occasional occupation; adding that the word *Paraiyan* is not found in an ancient Tamil vocabulary, the *Divākaram* which dates from the eleventh century of the Christian Era, whilst the word *Pulayan*, now used in Malayālam, the language of Travancore, was then used to denote those who are now called Paraiyans. (*Ibid.*, p. 244.) Some confirmation of this is found in the legend of the Saivite saint Nandan. He is called a Pulayan in the prose version of the *Periya Purānam*, though a native of the Sholamandalam (சோழமண்டலம்), which was a distinctly Tamil kingdom. But, on the other hand, an inscription mentioned by Mr. Francis in the Census Report for 1901 shows that Paraiyans were known as Paraiyans in the eleventh century A.D. (see section 10).

Dr. Gustav Oppert (Original Inhabitants of Bharatavarsa) contends that the names of many Dravidian tribes come from two Dravidian roots, *mal* and *ku*, both meaning mountain; and that the names of the Telugu *Mālas*, of the Tamil *Malayālis* (of the west coast and of the Shevaroy hills), of the Tamil *Maravans*, and, by a very bold phonetic equation, of the Tamil *Pallans*, *Pallis*, *Paraiyans*, all mean 'the men of the hill-country' or 'the men from the hill-country.' Even the word *Valluvan* is treated in the same way. This derivation has received some attention, and is certainly not without some probability. But it is not clear to me that Dr. Oppert's equation is justifiable; and even

if it is admitted, it is not obvious what it indicates, for most of the tribes referred to are not connected with the hills, do not make pilgrimages to the hill-country, or worship in the temples of the modern hill-tribes.

It is of course conceivable that the Paraiyans, and the other very distinct tribes in the list discussed by Dr. Oppert, may have been originally mountaineers, but, at present, the conjecture cannot be regarded as even a working hypothesis. While there can be no doubt of the antiquity of the Paraiyans—as I shall show in section 10—I am driven to confess that their origin is one of the unsolved problems of Dravidian ethnology; and that their name gives no practical guidance in the matter.

The following very interesting extract from Sonnerat's Voyages is supplied by Mr. Thurston. It will be noted that this account is a hundred and twenty years old :—

Pariahs. "They are prohibited from drawing water from the wells of other castes: but have particular wells of their own near their habitations, round which they place the bones of animals that they may be known and avoided. When an Indian of any other cast permits a Paria to speak to him, this unfortunate being is obliged to hold his hand before his mouth, lest the Indian may be contaminated with his breath; and, if he is met on the highway, he must turn on one side to let the other pass. If any Indian whatever, even a Choutre, by accident touches a Paria, he is obliged to purify himself in a bath. The Brahmins cannot behold them, and they are obliged to fly when they appear . . . . Great care is taken not to eat anything dressed by a Paria, nor even to drink out of the vessel he has used; they dare not enter the house of an Indian of another caste; or, if they are employed in any work, a door is purposely made for them; but they must work with their eyes on the ground; for if it is perceived they have glanced at the kitchen, all the utensils must be broke. . . . . The infamacy of the Parias is reflected on the Europeans: last are held in more detestation, because, setting aside the little respect they have for the cow, whose flesh they eat, the Indians reproach them with spitting in their houses, and even their temples: that when drinking they put the cup to their lips, and their fingers to their mouths in such a manner that they are defiled with the spittle.* "

* Sonnerat: 'Voyage to the East Indies,' 1774 and 1781.

4. *Numbers.*—According to the Census of 1891 there were 2,059,466 persons of the Paraiyan caste in the Madras Presidency. According to the Census of 1901, the total number of Paraiyans amounted to 2,152,840. Of these 1,048,274 were males, and 1,104,566 were females. The number of Valluvans was 54,760.

5. *Distribution.*—Paraiyans are to be found throughout the Tamil districts from North Arcot to Tinnevelly, and in the southern extremity of the Native State of Travancore. In the districts of the Madras Presidency to the north of Madras and North Arcot, and in the Nizam's Dominions, Telugu Mālas take the place of the Paraiyans. The following table gives the numbers of Paraiyans according to sex in the districts where they are most numerous. The figures are taken from the Census Report of 1901.

District.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Madras	30,877	31,827	62,704
Chingleput	162,556	158,770	321,326
North Arcot	94,450	98,193	192,643
Salem	90,092	94,355	184,947
South Arcot	273,287	282,962	556,249
Tanjore	146,407	163,984	310,391
Trichinopoly	65,543	70,234	135,777
Madura	66,937	73,147	140,084
Tinnevelly	48,372	55,058	103,430

6. *Language.*—Though the Paraiyan speaks Tamil with many vulgarisms and abbreviations of inflexional suffixes, and is often exceedingly slovenly in his articulation, I have not found that his speech differs materially from ordinary Tamil. Local variants from more usual terms may occur, or some particular agricultural term may be used to the exclusion of other synonyms, and of course the use of ச for ஜ, and of வ for ழ, which distinguishes the Tamil of the southern districts from that of the districts near Madras, holds good for Paraiya Tamil as well as Vellāla Tamil. But I know no reason to distinguish between the Tamil of the Paraiyan and that of the other Tamil speaking castes. Paraiya Tamil is Tamil, in spite of the saying பறப்பேச்சு அரைப்பேச்சு, *parappēcchu areippēcchu*, "Paraiya speech is but half-speech."

TANGALÁN PARAIYANS.

7. *Literacy.*—The number of Paraiyans who can read and write is extremely small. In 1891 the percentage of illiterates was for the whole caste 98·54. Among males the illiterates amounted to 97·25, and among females to 99·84. According to the more careful enumeration of 1901, the illiterates are 99·5 of the Paraiyan population. Among males, 99 out of one hundred persons can neither read nor write. Among females, not one in a hundred has even the rudiments of knowledge. I have no hesitation in endorsing the accuracy of the later figures.

Very few Paraiyan children attend school, and of those who do only a small proportion attend regularly.

On the other hand, it must be remembered that a very large number of Native Christians are by race Pariahs, though they now avoid the designation. Had it been possible to include them in the statistics of literacy, there can be little doubt that the percentage of illiterates would have been lowered.

8. *Names and nick-names.*—It would be very difficult to prepare a list of the names common among Paraiyans, for they have an inexhaustible stock from which to draw. Some of the most common names of males are :—

Kanni or Kanniyappan.	Subban.
Rāman or Rāmaswāmi.	Nondi.
Rāju.	Tambiran.
Vēlu.	Perumāl.
Muttan.	Vīran.
Māri.	Sellan.
Kanagan.	Amāvāsi.

In one village where the Paraiyans were almost all Vaishnavas, by profession *not* by practice, the people were all named after the multitudinous heroes of the Mahābhārata, and dirty naked Paraiya children answered to the names of Ikshvākan, Karnan, Bhiman and Draupadi!

The regular names of Tamil women are not distinctive of their caste. Tai, Pārpathi, Ammai, Kanni, Muttammāl, Rajammāl, Ammani, Selli, Gangammāl are among the most common.

It is usual to give the father's name when distinguishing one Paraiyan from another, *e.g.*, Tamburan, son of Kannan. There is no termination, prefix or agnomen to mark the Paraiyan caste. In legal documents the prefix

para (பற) denotes the Paraiyan, *e.g.*, *Para Kanni* the Paraiyan Kanni, but this is a purely clerical formula.

The Paraiyan delights in nick-names. I have somtimes found men who had grown so accustomed to their nick-names that they had almost forgotten their less striking personal names. The following are very common :—

Nondi, lame man or woman.
Kallan, thief.
Kullan, dwarf.
Vellei, white, light complexioned.
Kannan, man "with eyes."
Muthali, crocodile.
Kudiyan, drunkard.

No special practice is observed in giving names to children; except, of course, no name is given declaring virtue or merit, lest the wrath of malevolent spirits should be aroused. The name given soon after birth is retained through life, and is used for all purposes; no second or secret name being given and reserved for religious or ceremonial purposes.

9. *Sub-divisions.*—I am not aware that among Paraiyans there are any exogamous sub-divisions, *i.e.*, sub-divisions in which the males must seek their wives from other sub-divisions. There are said to be some endogamous sub-divisions, *i.e.*, sub-divisions in which the males must marry females of the same sub-division to which they themselves belong. Valluvans are said only to marry Valluva women, and washermen are said to marry girls of their own Paraiya washerman caste. It is doubtful whether either Valluvans or washermen are very particular in the observation of this custom. Tangalān Paraiyans do not marry outside their own section, nor do the Sozhia Paraiyans. [All sections interdine.]

There are many other sub-divisions among Paraiyans. The Census of 1891 enumerates 348. Among these the chief were Tangalān (to which many domestics belong) Valangamattu, Katti, Sāmbān, Sozhia Tamil, Kongan, Koleiga, Amma, Kottai, Morasu, Kizhakkatti, Pucchai. The Konga Paraiyans beat the drums (*mēlam*) at festivals. In the Coimbatore district the Sozhia Paraiyans are said to be lowest of all. The term *Sāmbān* seems to me not to be the name of a sub-division, but rather a term of respectability equivalent to *Panakkāran* or *Muppan.* At least it is

commonly used in this sense in the Coimbatore district. The report of the Census of 1901 more cautiously states that the sub-divisions are numerous. The vast majority are nominal. A few may be due to differences in occupation. (See section 37.) How slight they are is evident from the fact that they do not prevent marriage between members of different sections.

It should be noted that, while some Paraiyans eat carrion, many do not. Those who do are regarded with much contempt by those who do. (See section 38.)

10. *Antiquity.*—In the section discussing the name of the Paraiya caste, the uncertainty of any inference as to the original habitat of the Paraiyan was pointed out. I know of no legend or popular belief among these people, indicating that they think themselves to have come from any other part of the country than that where they now find themselves. There is, however, some evidence that the race has had a long past, and one in which they had independence and possibly great importance in the Peninsula.

(1) Mr. H. A. Stuart, in the Census Report for 1891, mentions that the Valluvans were priests to the Pallava Kings, before the introduction of the Brāhmans, and even for some time after it. He quotes "an unpublished Vatteluttu inscription, believed to be of the 9th century" in which the following sentence occurs :—

இத்தளி உவச்சன் ஸ்ரீவல்லுவம் பூவணவன் நியதம் ஆருளிட்டு உவச்சப் பணிசெய்பவன்.

This may be translated—

"Sri Valluvam Puvanavan, the Uvacchan (or temple-ministrant) will employ six men daily, and do the temple service."

The inference is that the Valluvan was a man of recognised priestly rank, and of great influence. The prefix ஸ்ரீ (sri) is a notable honorific. (For the meaning of Valluvan see section 30.)

(2) By itself the above inscription would prove little, but the whole legendary history of the greatest of all Tamil poets, and one of the greatest didactic poets in the world, Tiruvalluvar, "The Holy Valluvan," confirms all that can be deduced from it. His date can only be fixed approximately, but it is probable that he flourished not later than the tenth century A.D. It is safe to say that this extraordinary sage could not have attained the fame he did, or

have received the honours that were bestowed upon him, had not the Valluvans, and therefore the Paraiyans, been in the circle of respectable society in his day. This conjecture is strengthened by the legend that he married a Vellāla girl.

The same hypothesis is the only one that will account for the education, and the vogue of the sister of the poet, the aphoristic poetess Avvei.

(3) In the Census Report, 1901, Mr. Francis mentions an inscription of the Chola King Rājarāja, dated about the eleventh century A.D., in which the Paraiyan caste is called by its own name. It had then two sub-divisions, the *nesavu* or weavers, and the *ulavu* (உழவு) or ploughmen. The caste had even then its own hamlets, wells, and burning grounds.

There are certain privileges possessed by Paraiyans, which they could never have gained for themselves from orthodox Hinduism. These seem to be survivals of a past, in which Paraiyans held a much higher position than they do now; or at any rate show that they are as ancient in the land as any other Dravidians (Mudaliars, Pillais, &c.) whom the Paraiyan calls 'Tamils' (தமிழர்), a name which he does not apply to himself. It has been impossible to do more than gather a few of these; but those mentioned are typical.

An extract from the *Indian Antiquary*, vol. iii, p. 191, quoted in the *Madras Census Report*, 1891, mentions that at Mēlkotta and in the Aiyangar Vaishnava temple at Bailur, the Holeyars or Kanarese Paraiyans have the right of entering the temple three days in the year, specially set apart for them; and that in the great Saiva festival at Tiruvālūr in the Tanjore district, the headman of the Paraiyans is mounted on the elephant with the god, and carries his chowri (or yak-tail fly fan).

At Srīperumbudūr in the Chingleput district the Paraiyans enjoy a similar privilege, for having sheltered an image of the locally worshipped incarnation of Vishnu during a Musalmān raid.

To this day a Paraiyan annually becomes husband of Egattāl, the tutelary deity of the Black Town in Madras, and actually ties the *tāli* or marriage-token round the neck of the image.

Paraiyans are allowed to take part in pulling the cars of the idols in the great festivals at Conjeeveram, Kumbakōnam and Srīvilliputtūr. Their touch is not reckoned to defile the ropes used, so that other Hindus will also pull with them. With this may be compared the fact that the Telugu Mālas are custodians of the goddess Gauri, the bull Nandi and Ganēsa, the chief gods of the Saiva Kāpus and Balijas. It may also be noted that Kōmati Chettis, who claim to be Vaisyas, are bound to invite Mādigas to their marriages, though they take care that the latter do not hear the invitation.

Another fact which points to the ancient position of the Paraiyan in the land is the universally admitted fact that he is more intimate, so to speak, with local gods, goddesses, demons and the like, than the high caste man is or can be. I have heard well authenticated instances of Brāhman women worshipping at Paraiya shrines in order to procure children. Near Palāppattūr, in the Chingleput district, I once saw a Paraiya exorciser treating a Brāhman by uttering *mantrams* (consecrated formulæ) and waving a sickle up and down the sufferer's back, as he stood in a threshing floor.

To this may be added the very general belief that the Paraiyans know the village boundaries better than any one also. They are indeed wonderfully expert in this matter, and unerringly point out where boundaries should run, even when the Government demarcation stones are completely overgrown by prickly-pear, or have been removed. Mr. H. A. Stuart records a custom "which prevails in some parts of making a Paraiyan walk the boundaries of a field with a pot of water on his head, when there is any dispute about their exact position." He thinks that the only satisfactory explanation of this is that the connection of the Paraiyans with the soil is "of much longer standing than that of other castes."

The admitted proprietary right which Paraiyans have in the site, known as *chēri-nattam*, on which their huts stand is a confirmation of this. These sites are entered as such on the official village maps. They cannot be taken from the Paraiyans, and date from time immemorial. Throughout the whole of the Tamil country it is usual to find that the land allotted for house-site (*nattam*) is in two portions in every village (ūr). One part is known by the Sanskrit name *grāmam* (ग्राम the village), the inhabited

place). The other is called by the Dravidian name, chēri (Tam. சேரி, the gathering, or the gathering place). Sometimes the latter is called by the fuller title *parchēri*, *i.e.*, the gathering place of the Paraiyans (*Anglice* parcheri, parcherry). In the *grāmam* live the Brāhmans, who sometimes dwell in a quarter by themselves known as the *agrahāra*, and also the Kōmati-Chettis, Sudra Mudaliyars, Pillais, and other Hindus. In the *paṛachēri* live the Paraiyans. The *paṛachēri* and the *grāmam* are always separated, at least by a road or lane, often by several fields.

And not only is it usual thus to find that in every village the Paraiyans as a community possess a house-site. There are many cases in which more than one *chēri* is attached to a *grāmam*. This seems to repudiate the suggestion that at some period or periods the higher castes relegated the Paraiyans to these *chēris*. Indeed in some cases the very names of the *chēris* suggest, what appears to be the more correct view, *viz.*, that the *chēris* had a distinct origin. For instance the whole revenue village (ūr) of Teiyūr near Chingleput, consists of one Sudra *grāmam* and seven Paraiya *chēris*, each with a name of its own: Periyapillēri, Komanchēri, &c. In other cases, *e.g.*, Ideipālayam to the north of the district, and Varadarajapuram near Vandalūr, only Paraiya hamlets exist; there is no *grāmam*.

In South Arcot there are at least two villages (Govindanallūr in the Chidambaram taluq and Andapet in the Tiruvanamalai taluq) inhabited only by Paraiyans, where even the maniyakkaran (munsiff, village headman) is a Paraiyan.

Other instances might be quoted in proof of the same opinion. And, when the ceremonial antipathy between Brāhman and Paraiyan is examined, it points in the same direction. It is well known that a Brāhman considers himself polluted by the touch, the presence, or the shadow of a Paraiyan, and will not allow him to enter his house, or even the street in which he lives, if it is an *agrahāra*. But it is not so well known that the Paraiyans will not allow a Brāhman to enter the *chēri*. There is more in this than the aversion of a ceremonially strict vegetarian for a degraded flesh-eating serf. Many Sudras eat mutton, but their presence does not pollute the Brāhman. The gipsy mat-makers, called Koravans and Kuruvikkārans in Tamil, and Yerukalas in Telugu, eat cats, rats, and even

the village pig, but they are allowed to draw water from the caste wells that a Paraiyan may not look into. Mr. Padfield (*Hindu at Home*, p. 265) says that this is because the Paraiyan eats carrion. But all Paraiyans do not do so. The separation of the Paraiyan from the caste Hindu is based on a more ancient distinction than that occasional and local habit would account for.

[Should a Brahman venture into a *parachēri*, water with which cowdung has been mixed is thrown on his head, and he is driven out. Some Brahmans consider a forsaken *parachēri* an auspicious site for an agrāhāra.]

Taken together, these facts seem to show that the Paraiya priests (Valluvans), and therefore the Paraiyans as a race, are very ancient, that ten centuries ago they were respectable, and that many were weavers. The privileges they enjoy are relics of an exceedingly long association with the land. The institution of the *parachēri* points to original independence, and even to possession of much of the land.

If the account of the colonisation of Tondeimandalam by Vellālans in the eighth century A.D. is historic, then it is possible that at that date the Paraiyans lost the land, and that about that time their degradation as a race began.

I do not venture to assert for this hypothesis that it does more than fit in with such facts as are known. At any rate it bears out Dr. Oppert's conclusion that the Paraiyan is 'the representative of an ancient Dravidian population.'

N.B.—It need scarcely be said that many Paraiya hamlets are not ancient, and have come into existence through groups of Paraiyans settling on waste land. A very peculiar case is that of the *grāmam* founded for, and occupied by the clerks of the earliest Collectors (district Magistrates) of the *Jagir* of Karunguli from 1795 A.D. to 1825 A.D. These clerks were Brāhmans, and it was called the *agrahāram*. It was deserted when the head-quarters of the Collector were removed to Conjeveram. It is now occupied by Paraiyans, but is still called the *agrahāram*.

11. *A settled race.*—From this it will be clear that the Paraiyans have long been a settled race in the land. And, though a number of them emigrate to Ceylon, Mauritius, South Africa, the West Indies, the Straits Settlements, and even to Fiji, the vast majority live and die within a mile or two of the spot where they were born

12. *Their houses.*—The houses in which Paraiyans live are not temporary erections, nor intended for use during certain seasons of the year only. The rudest form is a hut made by tying a few leaves of the palmyra palm on to a frame work of poles or bamboos. The better class of houses are a series of rooms with low mud walls and thatched roof, but generally without doors, surrounding a small court-yard, in which the family goats, buffaloes and fowls have their home. The cooking is done anywhere where it is convenient either in-doors or out, as there is no fear of pollution from the glance or shadow of any passer-by. Very occasionally the walls of the house, especially those facing the street, are white-washed, or decorated with variegated patterns or figures in red and white. Paraiya women, like higher caste women, are much given to tracing exceedingly intricate symmetrical designs (Tamil *kōlam*, கோலம்) with rice flour on the smooth space or pathway immediately before the doors of their houses, for the purpose of preventing the entrance of evil spirits.

13. *Admissions to the caste.*—Admissions to the Paraiya caste from higher castes do occur. I met an Aiyangar Brāhman who was working as a cooly with some Paraiya labourers at Kodaikānal on the Palni hills. He had become infatuated with a Paraiya woman, and had consequently been excommunicated from his own caste. He had then become a Paraiyan. The children of Mudaliyar (Sudra) men and Paraiya women are considered to be Paraiyans. In Madras city many low Eurasians are supposed to have been absorbed in the ranks of the Christian, especially the Roman Catholic Paraiya population in Black Town. There are no ceremonies to be undergone before admission to the ranks of the Paraiyans.

14. *Panchayats, Paṇakkāra, Dēsayi Chettis.*—In every Paraiya village (*parchēri*) a small number of the more important men are known as *paṇakkārar* (Tamil பணக்காரன் *money-man*). The application of the term may be due to their comparative opulence among their miserable neighbours, or it may have arisen from the custom of paying them a small sum (for *panam* means a small copper coin of varying value, worth nominally eighty cowries) for various services to the commune. They form a sort of committee or council to decide ordinary quarrels, to amerce the damages in case of assault, seduction, rape and adultery. They have power to dissolve marriages on account of the adultery of

the wife, or if the husband has deserted his wife. In these cases their authority is really based on the public opinion of the *parachēri*, and goes no further than that public opinion will enforce it. A meeting of these *paṇakkārar* is called a *panchāyat*, *i.e.*, a meeting of a committee of five persons, but the number of *paṇakkārar* in a *panchāyat* varies. There is no headman in a Paraiya hamlet corresponding to the munsiff (Tamil *maniyakkāran* மணியக்காரன்) or village magistrate of the Hindu village (*grāma*). In modern practice the Paraiyans are, for police purposes, under the authority of the munsiff of the *grāma*, and there is a growing tendency on their part to refer all disputes and assaults to the munsiff, or even directly to the police. On the other hand, cases of a more domestic nature, such as disputes about betrothals, seduction, &c., are still dealt with, generally acutely and fairly, by the Paraiya *panchāyat*. It should be added that the rank of *paṇakkāran* is hereditary, and is regarded as honourable. (See also section 25.)

The Paraiyans like all the other 'right-hand' (*valarakei*) castes—a phrase which marks a distinction among the Dravidian castes now quite meaningless—also come under the jurisdiction of the Dēsayi Chettis, who have held a sort of censorship since the days of the Nawābs of Arcot over some twenty-four of these 'right-hand' castes, chiefly in North Arcot. The Dēsayi Chetti has nominal power to deal with all moral offences, and is supposed to have a representative in every village, who reports every offence. But, though his authority is great in North Arcot, and the fines levied there bring in an income of hundreds of rupees yearly, it is not so much dreaded in other districts. The punishment usually inflicted is a fine; but sometimes a delinquent Paraiyan will be made to crawl on his hands and knees on the ground, between the legs of a Paraiya woman, as a final humiliation. The punishment of excommunication, *i.e.*, cutting off from fire and water, is sometimes the fate of the recalcitrant, either before the *panchāyat* or the Dēsayi Chetti; but it is seldom effective for more than a short time.

Mr. K. Rangachari adds that in certain places, the Dēsayi Chetti appoints the Pannakkāran, and that in this case the latter is subordinate to the Dēsayi, and that a man called the Variyan or Chalavāthi is sometimes appointed as assistant to the Paṇakkāran. He also mentions some other punishments. The fine for adultery is from 7 pagodas 14

fanams to 11 pagodas, when the wronged woman is unmarried. If she is married, the amount ranges from 12 pagodas 14 fanams to 16 pagodas. The fine is said to be divided between the woman, her husband, the members of the *panchāyat* and the *pannakkārans*. Formerly an offender against the Paraiyan community was tied to a post at the beginning of the trial, and, if found guilty, was beaten. He might escape the flogging by paying a fine of 2 fanams (one fanam = $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas) per stripe.

Sometimes a delinquent is paraded through the hamlet carrying a rubbish basket, or is ordered to make a heap of rubbish at a certain spot. Sometimes a cord is passed from one big toe over the bowed neck of the culprit, and tied to his other big toe and then a stone is placed on his bent back.

In some places, when an unmarried woman is convicted of adultery, she is publicly given a new cloth and a bit of straw or a twig, apparently in mockery. It is said that formerly, if the chastity of a bride was suspected, she had to pick some cakes out of boiling oil. This she had to do just after the tāli had been tied in the wedding ceremony, after bathing. Her hair, nails, and clothes were examined, to see that she had no charm concealed. After lifting the cakes from the oil, she had to husk some rice with her bare hand. If she could do this, her virtue was established.

[Excommunicated Paraiyans are said to go to a mythical place called Vinnamangalam. It is an utter insult to tell a Paraiya to go to Vinnamangalam. In some documents signed by Paraiyans the words "If I fail to fulfil the conditions of our agreement, I shall go to Vinnamangalam" are inserted.]

15. *Oaths.*—In all inquiries by the Police, the *panchāyat*, or the Dēsayi Chetti, the Paraiyan only tells what in his opinion it is expedient to tell. But evidence given after burning a piece of camphor is said to be reliable. I know no instance of trial by ordeal. (See para. 14 *ad fin.* and para. 18.)

16. *Marriage.*—As in most Eastern races, all matters relating to sex have an unhealthy prominence among Paraiyans, and no account of the Paraiyans can omit mention of the fact. The attainment of puberty by boys is not made a matter of much comment; but, in the case of girls, it is a subject of greedy curiosity to most of the women in

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the village. The child at once begins to wear a covering of some sort, even if it be the most pathetic rag, over her left shoulder and breast. Till this time a bit of cotton cloth round her waist has been considered sufficient.

[Among the Tangalān Paraiyans, when a girl attains puberty, she is kept apart either in the house or in a separate hut. Pollution is supposed to last eight days. On the ninth day, the girl is bathed and seated in the court-yard of the house. Flowers and betel-leaves are placed before her. Ten small lamps of flour paste (called *drishti māvu vilakku*), to avert the evil eye, are put on a sieve, and waved before her three times. Then coloured water (*arati* or *ālām)* and burning camphor are waved before her. Some near female relatives then stand behind her, and strike her waist and sides with *puttu* (flour cake) tied in a cloth. This is believed to make her strong. At the same time other women strike the ground behind the girl with a rice-pestle. Then presents are given to the girl.

In some places the girl is beaten with the *puttu* within the house by her mother-in-law or paternal aunt. The latter repeatedly asks the girl to promise that her daughter shall marry her paternal aunt's son.]

17. *Prohibitions to marriage.*—I am not aware of any prohibitions to marriage based on social status, geographical or local differences in the places of residence, or on differences of, or changes in occupation. A village Paraiyan may marry a Paraiya woman from a town. An agricultural labourer may marry the daughter of a domestic servant. Difference in religion is also of little moment. A Christian Paraiyan will marry a heathen girl; though it should be said that she is usually baptised at or about the time of the marriage. A Christian girl is sometimes married to a heathen Paraiyan. I do not think that the fact that certain Paraiyans paint the *nāmam* of Vishnu on their foreheads, while others smear their foreheads with the ashes of Sīva, prevents marriages between them. It is said the Paraiya priests (Valluvans) marry among themselves only; but I doubt if this is so. Of course Tamil Paraiyans do not marry Telugu Pariahs (Mālas).

The man must be older than his bride. Subject to this condition, it is usual for a youth to marry his father's sister's daughter, or his mother's brother's daughter. A girl should be married to her mother's brother's son, if he is old enough,

but not, as among the Konga Vellālas and some Reddis, if he is a child. In short, Paraiyans follow the usual Tamil custom, but it is often neglected.

18. *Marriage contracts.*—Marriage contracts are sometimes made by parents while the parties most concerned are still infants; often while they are still children; in the majority of cases about the time when the girl attains the marriageable age. The bridegroom may be many years older than the bride, especially when custom, as detailed above, settles who shall be his bride. The bride has absolutely no choice in the matter; but, if the bridegroom is a man of some years or position, his preferences are consulted. The older sister should be given in marriage before her younger sisters are married. The arrangements are more or less a bargain. Presents of clothes, paltry jewels, rice, vegetables, and perhaps a few rupees are exchanged between the families of the bride and of the bridegroom. The household that seeks the marriage naturally gives the larger gifts.

The actual marriage ceremony is very simple. The essential part is the tying of a small token or ornament (Tamil *tāli*, தாலி), varying in value from a few annas to four or five rupees, by a turmeric-stained string, round the neck of the bride. This is done by the bridegroom in the presence of a Valluvan (see section 30), who mutters some kind of blessing on the marriage. A series of feasts, lasting over two or three days, is given to all the relatives of both parties by the parents of newly married couple.

The bride and bridegroom do not live together immediately, even if the girl is old enough. The exact date at which their life together may begin is settled by the bride's mother. The occasion, called in Tamil *soppana-muhūrttam* (சோபன முகூர்த்தம்), is celebrated by another feast and much merry-making, not always seemly.

Paraiyans do not prostitute either unmarried or married women for gain as a tribal custom. Even among the most degraded, immorality is considered terribly disgraceful in a girl. In a married woman it is a matter for the husband to attend to. A Paraiya man is not expected to be chaste.

The following detailed account of the marriage ceremonies among the Tangalān Paraiyans was furnished by Mr. K. Rangachari. The parents or near relations of the contracting parties meet, and talk over the match. If an

agreement is arrived at, an adjournment is made to the nearest liquor shop, and a day fixed for the formal exchange of betel leaves, which is the sign of a binding engagement. A Paraiyan, when he goes to seek the hand of a girl in marriage, will not eat at her house if her family refuse to consider the alliance, to which the consent of the girl's maternal uncle is essential. The Paraiyan is particular in the observation of omens, and, if a cat or a Valiyan crosses his path when he sets out in quest of a bride, he will give her up. The betrothal ceremony, or pariyam, is binding as long as the contracting couple are alive. They may live together as man and wife without performing the marriage ceremonial, and children born to them are considered as legitimate. But, when their offspring marry, the parents must first go through the marriage rites, and the children are then married in the same pandal on the same day. At the betrothal ceremony, the headman, father, maternal uncle, and two near relations of the bridegroom-elect, proceed to the girl's house, where they are received, and sit on seats or mats. Drink and plantain fruits are offered to them. Some conversation takes place between the headmen of the two parties, such as "Have you seen the girl? Have you seen her house and relations? Are you disposed to recommend and arrange the match?" If he assents, the girl's headman says "As long as stones and the Kāveri river exist, so that the sky goddess Akāsavāni and the earth goddess Bhūmidēvi may know it; so that the water-pot (used at the marriage ceremony) and the sun and moon may know it; so that this assembly may know it; I . . . . give this girl." The headman of the bridegroom then says "The girl shall be received into the house by marriage. These thirty-six pieces of gold are yours, and the girl mine." He then hands over betel-leaves and nuts to the other headman, who returns them. The exchange of betel is carried out three times. Near the headmen is placed a tray containing betel-nuts, a rupee, a turmeric-dyed cloth in which a fanam ($2\frac{1}{2}$ annas) is tied, a cocoanut, flowers, and the bride's money varying in amount from seven to twenty rupees. The fanam and bride's money are handed to the headman of the girl, and the rupee is divided between the two headmen. On the betrothal day the relations of the girl offer flowers, cocoanuts, etc., to their ancestors, who are supposed to be without food or drink. The Paraiyans believe that their ancestors will be ill-disposed towards them if they are not propitiated with offerings of rice, and other things. For the purpose of

worship, the ancestors are represented by a number of cloths kept in a box made of bamboo or other material, to which the offerings are made. On the conclusion of the ancestor worship, the two headmen go to the liquor shop, and exchange drinks of toddy. This exchange is called *mel sambandham kural*, or proclaiming relationship. After the lapse of a few days, the girl's family is expected to pay a return visit, and the party should include at least seven men. Betel is again exchanged, and the guests are fed, or presented with a small gift of money. When marriage follows close on betrothal, the girl is taken to the houses of her relations, and goes through the *nalagu* ceremony, which consists of smearing her with turmeric paste, an oil-bath, and presentation of betel and sweets. The auspicious day and hour for the marriage are fixed by the Valluvan, or priest of the Paraiyans. The ceremonial is generally carried through in a single day. On the morning of the wedding day, three male and two married female relations of the bridegroom go to the potter's house, to fetch the pots, which have already been ordered. The potter's fee is a fowl, pumpkin, paddy, betel, and a few annas. The bride, accompanied by the headman and her relations, goes to the bridegroom's village, bringing with her a number of articles called *petti varisai* or box presents. These consist of a lamp, cup, brass vessel, ear-ornament called *kalappu*, twenty-five betel leaves and nuts, onions, and cakes, a lump of jaggery (palm sugar), grass mat, silver toe-ring, rice, a bundle of betel leaves, and five cocoanuts, which are placed inside a bamboo box. The next item in the proceedings is the erection of the milk-post, which is made of a pestle of tamarind or *Soymida febrifuga* wood, or a green bamboo. To the post leafy twigs of the mango or pīpal (*Ficus religiosa*) tree are tied. Near the marriage dais a pit is dug, into which are thrown nine kinds of grain, and milk is poured in. The milk-post is supported on a grinding stone painted with turmeric stripes, washed with milk and cow's urine, and worshipped, with the Valluvan as the celebrant priest. The post is then lifted by three men and two women, and set up in the pit. A string with a bit of turmeric (kankanam) is tied to the milk-post, and to it and the dais boiled rice is offered. Kankanams are also tied round the wrists of the bride and bridegroom. The bridegroom's party go to the temple or house where the bride is awaiting them, bringing with them a brass lamp, vessel and cup, castor and gingelly oil, combs, confectionary, turmeric,

and betel leaves. The procession is headed by Paraiyans beating tom-toms, and blowing on trumpets. When their destination is reached, all take their seats on mats, and the various articles which they have brought are handed over to the headman, who returns them. The bride is then taken in procession to the marriage house, which she is the first to enter. She is then told to touch with her right hand some paddy, salt, and rice, placed in three pots inside the house. Touching them with the left hand would be an evil omen, and every mishap which might occur in the family would be traced to the new daughter-in-law. The bride and bridegroom next go through the nalagu ceremony, and some of the relations proceed with the ceremony of bringing sand (*manal vāri sodangu*). A cousin of the bridegroom and his wife take three pots, called *basakaragam* and *kursul*, and repair to a river, tank (pond), or well, accompanied by a few men and women. The pots are set on the ground, and close to them are placed a lamp, and a leaf with cakes, betel leaves and nuts, spread on it. *Pūja* is made to the pots by burning camphor, and breaking cocoanuts. The Vettiyan then says "The sun, the moon, the pots, and the owner of the girl have come to the pandal. So make haste, and fill the pot with water." The woman dips a small pot in water, and, after putting some sand or mud into a big pot, pours the water therein. The pots are then again worshipped. After the performance of the *nalaṅu*, the bridal couple go through a ceremony for removing the evil eye, called *sige kazhippu*. A leaf of *Ficus religiosa*, with its tail downwards, is held over their foreheads, and all the close relations pour milk over it, so that it trickles over their faces, or seven cakes are placed by each of the relations on the head, shoulders, knees, feet, and other parts of the body of the bridegroom. The cakes are subsequently given to a washerman. The parents of the bridal pair, accompanied by some of their relations, next proceed to an open field, taking with them the cloths, *tāli*, jewels, and other things which have been purchased for the wedding. A cloth is laid on the ground, and on it seven leaves are placed, and cooked rice, vegetables, etc., heaped up thereon. *Pūja* is done, and a goat is sacrificed to the Tangalāmmās (ancestors). By some the offerings are made to the village goddess, Pidāri, instead of to the ancestors. Meanwhile the bridegroom has been taken in procession round the village on horse-back, and the headmen have been exchanging betel in the pandal. On the bridegroom's return, he and the bride seat

themselves on planks placed on the dais, and are garlanded by their maternal uncles with wreaths of *Nerium oleander* flowers. The maternal uncle of the bride presents her with a ring. In some places, the bride is carried to the dais on the shoulders, or in the arms of her maternal uncle. While the couple are seated on the dais, the Valluvan priest lights the sacred fire (hōmam), and, repeating some words in corrupt Sanskrit, pours gingelly oil on to the fire. He then does *pūja* to the *tāli*, and passes it round, to be touched and blessed by those assembled. The bridegroom, taking up the *tāli*, shows it through a hole in the pandal to the sky or sun, and, on receipt of permission from those present, ties it round the neck of the bride. Thin plates of gold or silver, called *pattam*, are then tied on the foreheads of the contracting couple, first by the mother-in-law and sister-in-law. With Brāhman and non-Brāhman castes it is customary for the bride and bridegroom to fast until the *tāli* has been tied. With Paraiyans, on the contrary, the rite is performed after a good meal. Towards the close of the marriage day, fruit, flowers, and betel are placed on a tray before the couple, and all the kankanams, seven in number, are removed, and put on the tray. After burning camphor, the bridegroom hands the tray to his wife, and it is exchanged between them three times. It is then given to a washerman. The proceedings terminate by the two going with linked hands three times round the pandal. On the following day, the bride's relations purchase some good curds, a number of plantains, sugar and pepper, which are mixed together. All assemble at the pandal, and some of the mixture is given to the headman, the newly-married couple, and all who are present. All the articles which constitute the bride's dowry are then placed in the pandal, and examined by the headman. If they are found to be correct, he proclaims the union of the couple, and more of the curd mixture is doled out. This ceremony is known as *sambandham karal* or *sammandham piriththal*, (proclaiming relationship). Two or three days after the marriage, the bridegroom goes to the house of the bride, and remains there for three days. He is stopped at the entrance by his brother-in-law, who washes his feet, puts rings on the second toe, and keeps on pinching his feet until he has extracted a promise that the bridegroom will give his daughter, if one is born to him, in marriage to the son of his brother-in-law. The ring is put on the foot of the bride by her maternal uncle at the time of the marriage ceremony, after

the wrist threads have been removed. In some places it is done by the mother-in-law or sister-in-law, before the *tāli* is tied, behind a screen.

19. *Secondary wives.*—Polyandry does not exist among Paraiyans, and polygamy is not common, but I have known a few instances in which a Paraiyan had two regularly married wives, each wearing a *tāli*. On the other hand it is very common to find that a Paraiyan has, in addition to his formally married wife, another woman who occupies a recognised position in his household. The first wears the *tāli* (marriage badge). The other woman does not, but she is called 'the second wife' [Tamil (vulgar) இரண்டாவது பெண்சாதி]. She cannot be dismissed without the sanction of the *paracheri panchāyat*. The man who maintains her is called her husband, and her children are recognised as part of his family. I believe that a 'second wife' is usually taken only when the more formally married wife has no children, or when an additional worker is wanted in the house, or to help in the daily work. Thus a horsekeeper will often have two wives; one to prepare his meals and boil the grain for the horse, the other to go out day by day to collect grass for the horse. The Tamil proverb இரண்டு பெஞ்சாதிக்காரன் பாடு திண்டாட்டம், *i.e.*, "The experience of a man with two wives is anguish" applies to all these double unions. There are constant quarrels between the two women, and the man is generally involved, often to his own great inconvenience.

So far as I know, there is no prohibition against a Paraiyan marrying two sisters, either formally, or in the less regular manner just detailed. But this is not very common, unless the elder sister dies. Should she do so, it is quite common for a Paraiyan to marry his deceased wife's sister, if she is not already married.

20. *Births.*—A Paraiya woman usually goes back to her mother's house a month or two before she expects the birth of her first child; and it is usually born there. Its successors are generally born in their father's hut. I know of no special customs observed by the father or mother when the child is expected. Paraiya women are often very muscular, and engage in field-work to within a day to two, sometimes till within an hour or two of their confinement. The young wife's mother, and the women of the village look after her. Sometimes a "medicine-woman" (Tamil *marut-tuvacchi*, மருத்துவச்சி), who possesses or professes some knowledge of drugs and midwifery, is called in, if the case

is a bad one. Generally her barbarous treatment is but additional torture to the patient.

No special ceremonies are performed at the birth of a child; nor, so far as I know, is the mother subjected to any special diet, though for some days she lives chiefly on *kanji* (Tamil கஞ்சி, the water in which rice has been boiled, a kind of weak rice-broth). Immediately after the birth of the child, she drinks a concoction called *kashāyam* (Tamil கஷாயம்), in which there is much ginger. (Hence the Tamil proverb சுக்கு அதியாத கஷாயம் உண்டா, Is there any decoction without ginger in it?)

21. *Simanta.*—Among Sūdras there is a family ceremony to which the Sanskrit name *Simanta* has been assigned, though it is not the true *Simanta* observed by Brāhmans. It occurs only in connection with a first pregnancy. The expectant mother stands bending over a rice-mortar, and water, or human milk, is poured on her back by her husband's elder or younger sister. Money is also given to buy jewels for the expected child. The ceremony is of no interest to any one outside the family. (Hence the proverb ஊரார வாருங்கள் முதுகு நீர் குத்துங்கள், Come ye villagers, pour water on this woman's back!) This is used when outsiders are called in to do for a member of a family what the relatives ought to do. I have known this ceremony to be observed among Paraiyans, but not commonly. Among Brāhmans it is believed to affect the sex of the child. I doubt whether it has any definite meaning among Paraiyans. About a week after the birth of her child, the mother, as a purificatory ceremony, is rubbed with oil and bathed. She then returns to her regular duties in the house.

It should be added that it is firmly believed that, if a woman dies during pregnancy or in childbed, her spirit becomes an exceedingly malignant ghost, and haunts the precincts of the village where she dies.

I know of no special beliefs or customs with regard to twins or monstrosities. My impression is that it is not at all common for a Paraiya woman to have twins; but there is no possibility of verifying this.

22. *Naming.*—There is no special ceremony for naming a child among Paraiyans, as far as I know. Apparently its parents choose a name for it, or it receives a name by accident. Frequently its only name is a nick-name, which serves it all its life. (See section 8.)

23. *Widows.*—The widow of a Paraiyan, if not too old to bear children, generally lives with another man as his wife. Sometimes she is ceremonially married to him, and then wears the *tāli* (see section 18). So far as I have observed, a widow practically chooses her own second husband, and she is not restricted to any particular relative, such as her husband's elder or younger brother. The practice of the Levirate, by which the younger brother takes the widow of the elder, is non-existent as a custom among Paraiyas, though instances of such unions may be found. Indeed the popular opinion of the Tamil castes credits the Paraiyan with little regard for any of the restrictions of consanguinity, either prohibitive or permissive. "The palmyra palm has no shadow: the Paraiyan has no regard for seemliness." (பனை நாத்திற்கு நிழல் இல்லை, பறையனுக்கு முறையில்லை) is a common Tamil proverb.

During her widowhood a woman does not wear her *tāli*. It is removed at a gathering of her relatives some days after her husband's death. Paraiya women do not wear any distinctive dress when they are widows; nor do they shave their heads. But they cease to paint the vermilion mark (Tam. *kunkumam*) on their foreheads, which all married women who are living with their husbands always wear, except at times when they are considered ceremonially unclean.

24. *Divorce.*—Divorce is permitted. Frequently man and wife separate without any formality; but, where property is affected, the matter is referred to the *panchāyat* (see section 14). Both parties or their relatives are present at these inquiries, and usually fairly equitable decisions are arrived at. Adultery is not treated with the same severity by a Paraiya *panchāyat* as by the Canon Law, and is frequently compounded by a small fine. A wife, whose divorce has been sanctioned by the *panchāyat*, may be formally married again to her new lover, and wear the *tāli* of honourable married life.

25. *Inheritance.*—When a Paraiyan dies, his property, if he has any, descends to his family, as a family, according to ordinary Hindu usage. A mother's jewels generally pass to her daughter. Sometimes property, especially land, is divided on the death of the head of an household. In this case, his widow (if he leaves one) and his children, male and female, have shares more or less equal, according to an arrangement agreed upon by them, and settled by the

panchāyat. Inheritance of any petty communal office, such as watchman (*Talayāri*), digger (*Vettiyan*) is through the male. If there is more than one son, the sons hold the place, and take its emoluments in rate-free land and gifts from the villagers by turns for certain periods.

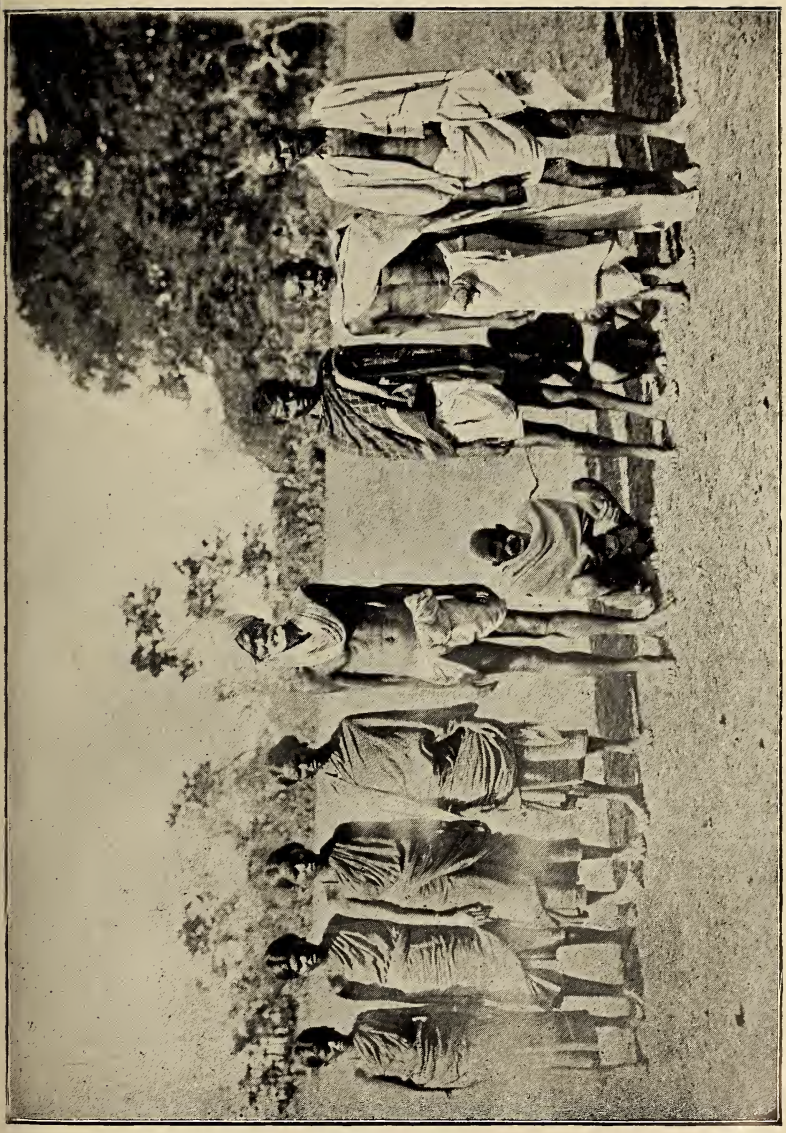
26. *Religion*.—The Report on the Census of 1891 says : "The Paraiyans have been but little affected by Brāhmanical doctrines and customs, though in respect to ceremonies they have not escaped their influence. Paraiyans are nominally Saivites, but in reality they are demon-worshippers." This is a very incomplete account of the religion of the Paraiyan, and is not entirely correct.

Brāhman influence has scarcely affected the Paraiyan at all, even in ceremonial. No Paraiyan may enter any Vaishnava or Saiva temple even of the humblest sort, though of course his offerings of money are accepted, if presented by the hands of some friendly Sudra, even in such exclusive shrines as that of Sri Vira Rāghavachāriar Swāmi at Tiruvallūr. The exceptions mentioned in section 10 confirm this by their uniqueness.

It is true that Paraiyans are often termed Saivites, but there are many nominal Vaishnavas among them, who regularly wear the *nāmam* of Vishnu on their foreheads. The truth is that the feminine deities, commonly called *dēvata* (*i.e.*, spirits, *ηὰωρωοζια* outside the vedic, epic and puranic pantheons) have been identified by Hindus with the feminine energy of Sīva ; and thus the Paraiyans who worship them have received the sectarian epithet. (See section 27.) As a matter of fact, the wearing of the *nāmam* of Vishnu, or the smearing of the ashes of Sīva, is of no meaning to a Paraiyan. They are neither Saivites nor Vaishnavites.

One other fact also must be allowed to modify the statement that Paraiyans are demon-worshippers. Like all other Dravidians, the Paraiyans acknowledge the existence of a supreme, omnipresent, personal spiritual being, the source of all, whom they call *Kadavul* (கடவுள், *i.e.*, He who is). *Kadavul* possesses no temples, and is not worshipped ; but he is the highest conception of Paraiya, and, I believe, of Dravidian thought.

27. *Dēvata*.—Paraiyans worship at least *three* classes of godlings or *dēvata* (Tamil தேவதை), generally called "the mothers," (Tamil *amma*, அம்மன், அம்மா, அம்மாள்).



PARAIYANS.

Sometimes these are worshipped as "the virgins" (Tamil *Kanniyamma* கன்னியம்மாக்கள்) or "the seven virgins," possibly because they have no husband.

(i) These "mothers" are worshipped collectively, in a group. They are then symbolised by seven stones or bricks, perhaps within a little enclosure, or on a little platform in the Paraiya hamlet, or under a margosa tree (Hind. nīm, Tam. வேம்பு), or sheltered by a wattle hut, or even by a small brick temple. This temple is universally known as the *Ammankoil* (Tam. அம்மன்கோவில்).

(ii) More usually one particular "mother" is worshipped at the Paraiya shrine. She is then called the village goddess (Tam. கிராம தேவதை, Sanskrit *grāma-dēvatā*) of that particular hamlet. She may be identical with the *grāma-dēvatā* of the Hindus living in the *grāmam*, or she may not. In any case she has her own shrine in the Paraiyan's hamlet. These "mothers" have no individuality. Their names are legion. Each village claims that its own "mother" is not the same as that of the next village; but all are supposed to be sisters. Each is supposed to be the guardian of the boundaries of the *chēri* or *grāmam* where her temple lies, sometimes of both *grāmam* and *chēri*. She is believed to protect its inhabitants and its live-stock from disease, disaster and famine, to promote the fecundity of cattle and goats, and to give children. In a word she is the benefactress of the place, and of all in it who worship her.

The following are a few of the names of these village tutelary deities:—

Ellammā: goddess of the boundary. She is worshipped by Tamil and Telugu Paraiyans.
Mūngilammā: bamboo goddess.
Padeiyattāl or *Padeiyācchi.*
Parrapotamma. She is a Telugu goddess supposed to cure diseases among cattle.
Pīdārīyammā. Sometimes called Ellei-Pidāri.

In this case the symbol of the goddess may be a conical stone or a carved idol. The shrine is the same as that described above. Occasionally a rude figure of the bull Nandi, and an iron trident mark the shrine. A lamp is often lighted before it at night.

The ceremonial of worship of all classes of *dēvata* is very simple. The worshipper prostrates himself before the

symbol of the deity (whether seven stones, one stone, or an image). He anoints it with oil, smears it with saffron, and daubs it with vermilion, garlands it with flowers (*Nerium odorum*, by preference) burns a bit of camphor, and circumambulates the shrine, keeping his right side toward it.

On special occasions he breaks cocoanuts, kills fowls, goats or sheep, of which the two last must be killed at one blow, pours out their blood, perhaps offers a little money, and goes his way, satisfied that he has done his best to propitiate the *dēvata* whom he has honoured.

28. *Festival at Periyapālayam.*--Of course special shrines attain very great fame. Thus the goddess Bavāniyammāl of Periyapālayam, some sixteen miles from Madras, is well known for many miles round, and crowds come from Madras city and even more distant places to her annual festival. Paraiyans, Pallis, and Chakkiliyans form the majority of the worshippers, but of late years Sudras and even Brāhmans are to be found at her shrine. The homage rendered to her is two-fold. Her worshippers sacrifice some thousands of sheep on the river bank outside her temple; and, entirely divesting themselves of their garments, and covering themselves with bunches of the leaves of the nīm or margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*) tree, perambulate the temple. Except on the five Sundays, usually in July and August, on which the festival is held, the shrine is forsaken, and the goddess is said to be a vegetarian; but on the five festival Sundays she is said to be as greedy for flesh as a leather-dresser's (Chakkiliyan) wife. A legend is told to account for this, which is practically as follows:--

There was once a *rishi*, who lived on the banks of the Periyapālayam river with his wife Bavani. Every morning she used to bathe in the river, and bring back water for the use of the household. But she never took any vessel with her in which to bring the water home, for she was so chaste that she had acquired power to form a water-pot out of the dry river sand, and carry the water home in it. But one day, while bathing, she saw the reflection of the face of the sky-god Indra in the water, and could not help admiring it. When she returned to the bank of the river, and tried to form her water-pot out of sand, as usual, she could not do so, for her admiration of Indra had ruined her power, and she went home sadly to fetch a brass water-vessel. Her husband saw her carrying this to the river, and at once suspected her of unchastity. Calling his son,

he ordered him to strike off her head with a sword. It was in vain that the son tried to avoid matricide. He had to obey, but he was so agitated by his feelings that, when at last he struck at his mother, he cut off not only her head, but also that of a leather-dresser's wife who was standing near. The two bodies lay side by side. The *rishi* was so pleased with his son's obedience that he promised him any favour that he should ask, but he was very angry when the son at once begged that his mother might be restored to life. Being compelled to keep his word, he told the son that, if he put his mother's head on her trunk, she would again live. The son tried to do so, but in his haste took up the head of the leather-dresser's wife by mistake, and put that to Bavani's body. Leather-dressers are flesh eaters, and so it comes about that on the days when her festival is celebrated Bavani—now a goddess—longs for meat, and thousands of sheep, goats, and fowls must be slain at her shrine. This legend bears marks of Brāhmanic influence. Curiously enough the priest of this Paraiya shrine is himself a Brāhman.

I am unable to give any explanation of the wearing of the margosa leaves. The people do it in fulfilment of a vow made in time of their own sickness, or that of their children, or even of their cattle. Thus a woman ill of fever will vow "to wear margosa leaves at Periyapālayam" if she recover. The vow may be made on behalf of a sick cow, and the animal will be bathed in the river, clad in margosa leaves, and led round the temple like any other worshipper. The act is thus a thanksgiving for mercies received, not an attempt to propitiate the goddess.

It should be noted that Periyapālayam is one of the shrines where hook-swinging was practised. The apparatus still lies beside the temple.

29. *Māriyattāl and Gangammāl.*—Two goddesses hold a position distinct from the "mothers" as a group, or as tutelary goddesses. These are Gangammāl and Māriyattāl, and their peculiarity is that they are itinerant deities. Gangammāl is often described as the goddess of cholera, and Māriyattāl as the goddess of small-pox, though both diseases are frequently ascribed to the latter. Māriyattāl is worshipped under the names of Poleramma (పోలేరమ్మ), and Ammavāru (అమ్మవారు) by Telugus. Sūdras as well as Paraiyans worship these deities.

For instance, near Arcotkuppam in the North Arcot district, a festival is held in honour of Gangammāl in the Tamil month *Vaikasi* (May–June), in which Sūdras join. *The* feature of the festival is the boiling of new rice as at Pongal. Men also put on women's clothes, and perform grotesque dances. In the same way, in the ten days' festival in honour of Māriyattāl held at Urtaramallūr during the Tamil month *Avani* (August), the goddess is carried about by washermen (Vannān), who perform a kind of pantomime (*vilas*), in her honour.

There is a curious belief that these goddesses (or Gangammāl, if they are distinguished) must travel along roads or paths, and cannot go across country, and that they cannot pass over the leaves of the margosa or the stems of the cactus called in Tamil perandei. Consequently, when cholera is about, and the goddess is supposed to be travelling from village to village seeking victims, branches of margosa and long strings of *perandei* are cut and placed on all the paths leading into *grāmam* or *chēri*. Sometimes, also, leaves of the margosa are strung together, and hung across the village street. These are called *toranam*.

Besides the various deities thus enumerated, there are a number of ghosts, ghouls and goblins (Tamil *pey, pisāsu* பேய், பிசாசு) that Paraiyans propitiate more or less regularly. Mathureivīran and Vīrabadran are two well-known demons. Also the ghosts of women who have died in child-bed come under this category.

30. *Paraiya priests or Valluvans.*—Among Tamil Paraiyans and Telugu Mālas, there are families in almost every village, who hold a kind of sacerdotal rank in the esteem of their fellows. Among theMālas they are known as the Dāsari (దాసరి). Among the Paraiyans they are called Valluvans (வள்ளுவன்); also Valluva Pandāram (வள்ளுவ பண்டாரம்), *i.e.*, the priestly Valluvan; also Valluva Paraiyan (வள்ளுவப் பறையன்), *i.e.*, the Paraiya Valluvan. I do not know what 'Valluvan' means. It is now used simply as an appellative. Their position and authority depend largely on their own astuteness. Sometimes they are respected even by Brāhmans for their powers as exorcists. On the other hand it is often impossible to see any difference between the Valluvans and the ordinary Paraiyans, except that their houses are usually a little apart from other houses in the *chēri*. They take a leading part in local Paraiya festivals.

At marriages they pronounce the formal blessing when the *tāli*, or marriage token, is tied round the bride's neck (see section 18). In cases of supposed possession by demons (தெய்வம், பிசாசு) or by the 'mothers' (see section 27), the Valluvan is consulted as to the meaning of the portent, and takes part in driving the spirit out of the victim, sometimes using violence and blows to compel the spirit to deliver its message and be gone. The Census Report for 1901 states that Valluvans do not eat or intermarry with other sections of the Paraiyans. I am unable to confirm this, and am inclined to doubt whether it is generally true. The total number of Valluvans, according to the Census of 1901, in the Madras Presidency was 54,760. The greatest of all Tamil poets, known only as Tiruvalluvar, *i.e.*, the holy Valluvan, was a Paraiyan of this sect (see section 10).

31. *Funerals.*—Among Paraiyans the dead are buried; though a few (generally Vaishnavas, I believe), burn the corpses. A portion of the village waste land is allotted for the purpose. Only Paraiyans are buried in it. The funeral-rites are absolutely simple. The corpse is carried on a temporary litter of palm-leaf mats and bamboos, wrapped in a cotton cloth, which is new if a new one can be afforded, and is interred or burned immediately.

N.B.—I am informed that Mālas in Bellary and Anantapur bury their dead quite naked.

About the third or fifth day after death, the *pāl sadangu* (Tamil, பால்சடங்கு), or 'milk ceremony' should take place, when some milk is poured out by the next of kin as an offering to the spirit of the deceased. This spirit is then supposed to assume a sort of corporiety, and to depart to the place of respite, till fate decrees that it be re-born. Of course this ceremony is accompanied by a family feast.

On the fifteenth day after death, another family gathering is held, and food is offered to the spirit of the dead person. This ceremony is known as the *karumāntaram* (Tamil கருமாந்தரம்), or 'expiatory ceremony'.

Occasionally, for some months after the death, a few flowers are placed on the grave, and a cocoanut is broken over it, and some attempt is even made to recognise the anniversary of the date. But there is no regular custom, and I am inclined to think that such instances as I have noticed are imitations of Brāhmanical usages.

The ordinary Paraiyan's conception of life after death is merely a vague belief that the departed soul continues its existence somewhere. He has no ordered eschatology.

The bodies are placed in the grave in a horizontal position. I know of no instance of their being buried in a sitting position; though it is very likely that the corpse of a Paraiyan who has acquired reputation for sanctity—as some do—may be buried in a sitting posture, like Sanyāsis. Valluvans are buried in a sitting position.

Children are buried in the usual way in the ordinary burial-ground. But, if the first-born child *is a male*, it is buried by the house, or even within the house, so that its corpse may not be carried off by any witch or sorcerer, to be used in magic rites (சூனியம்), as the body of a first-born child is supposed to possess special virtues. This practice, which is known in other castes besides the Paraiyans, was brought to my notice by the Rev. W. Goudie of Tiruvallūr about three years ago.

Mr. V. Govindan of the Madras Museum, has supplied the following note on the death ceremonies of the Paraiyans at Coimbatore. If the deceased was a married man, the corpse is placed in a sitting posture in a booth made of twigs of margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*) and milk-hedge (*Euphorbia Tirucalli*), and supported behind by a mortar. The widow puts on all her ornaments, and decorates her hair with flowers. She seats herself on the left side of the corpse, in whose hands some paddy (unhusked rice) or salt is placed. Taking hold of its hands, some one pours the contents thereof into the hands of the widow, who replaces them in those of the corpse. This is done thrice, and the widow then ties the rice in her cloth. On the way to the burial-ground (*sudukādu*), the son carries a new pot, the barber a pot of cooked rice and brinjals (fruit of *Solanum Melongena*), and other things required for doing *pūja*. The Paraiyan in charge of the burial-ground carries a fire-brand. The mats and other articles used by the deceased, and the materials of which the booth were made, are carried in front by the washerman, who deposits them at a spot between the house of the deceased and the burial-ground called the *idukādu*, which is made to represent the shrine of Arichandra. Arichandra was a king, who became a slave of the Paraiyans, and is in charge of the burial-ground. At the *idukādu* the corpse is

placed on the ground, and the son, going thrice round it, breaks the pot of rice near its head. The barber makes a mark at the four corners of the bier, and the son places a quarter-anna on three of the marks, and some cow-dung on the mark at the north-east corner. The widow seats herself at the feet of the corpse, and another widowed woman breaks her tāli string, and throws it on the corpse. Arrived at the grave, the *gurukal* (priest) descends into it, does *pūja*, and applies *vibhūthi* (sacred ashes) to its sides. The body is lowered into it, and half a yard of cloth from the winding-sheet is given to the Paraiyan, and a quarter of a yard to an Āndi (religious mendicant). The grave is filled in up to the neck of the corpse, and bael (*Ægle Marmelos*) leaves, salt, and *vibhūthi* are placed on its head by the *gurukal*. The grave is then filled in, and a stone and thorny branch placed at the head end. As the son goes, carrying the water-pot, three times round the grave, the barber makes a hole in the pot, which is thrown on the stone. The son and other relations bathe, and return to the house, where a vessel containing milk is set on a mortar, and another containing water placed at the door. They dip twigs of the pīpal (*Ficus religiosa*) into the milk, and throw them on the roof. They also worship a lighted lamp. On the third day, cooked rice, and other food for which the deceased had a special liking, are taken to the grave, and placed on plantain leaves. *Pūja* is done, and the crows are attracted to the spot. If they do not turn up, the *gurukal* prays, and throws up water three times. On the seventeenth day, the son and others, accompanied by the *gurukal*, carry a new brick, and articles required for *pūja*, to the river. The brick is placed under water, and the son bathes. The articles for *pūja* are spread on a plantain leaf, before which the son places the brick. *Pūja* is done to it, and a piece of new cloth tied on it. It is then again carried to the river, and immersed therein. The ceremonial concludes with the lighting of the sacred fire (hōmam).

The death ceremonies of the Paraiyan, as carried out in the Chingleput district, are thus described by Mr. K. Rangachari. The corpse is washed, dressed up, and carried on a bier to the burning or burial-ground. Just before it is placed on the bier, all the relations who are under pollution go round it three times, carrying an iron measure, round which straw has been wrapped, and containing a light. On the way to the burial-ground, the son or grandson scatters

paddy (rice) which has been fried by the agnates (*pangālis*). A pot of fire is carried by a Vettiyan. At a certain spot the bier is placed on the ground, and the son goes round it, carrying a pot of cooked rice, which he breaks near the head of the corpse. This rice should not be touched by man or beast, and it is generally buried.

When the corpse has been placed on the pyre or laid in the grave, rice is thrown over it by the relations. The son, carrying a pot of water, goes round it thrice, and asks those assembled if he may finish the ceremony. On receiving their assent, he again goes three times round the corpse, and, making three holes in the pot, throws it down, and goes home without looking back. If the dead person is unmarried, a mock marriage ceremony, called *kanni kaziththal* (removing bachelorhood), is performed before the corpse is laid on the bier. A garland of arka (*Calotropis gigantea*) flowers and leaves is placed round its neck, and balls of mud from a gutter are laid on the head, knees, and other parts of the body. In some places a variant of the ceremony consists in the erection of a mimic marriage booth which is covered with leaves of the arka plant, flowers of which are also placed round the neck as a garland. On the third day after death, cooked rice, milk, fruits, etc., are offered to the soul of the departed on two leaves placed one near the head, the other near the feet of the corpse. Of these, the former is taken by men, and the latter by women, and the food eaten. The *karmānthirum*, or final ceremony, takes place on the twelfth or sixteenth day. All concerned in it proceed to a tank with cooked rice, cakes, etc. A figure of Ganēsa (*Pillayār*) is made with mud, and five *kalasams* (vessels) are placed near it. The various articles which have been brought are set out in front of it. Two bricks, on which the figures of a man and woman are drawn, are given to the son, who washes them, and does *pūja* to them after an effigy has been made at the waterside by a washerman. He then says: "I gave calves and money. Enter kailāsam (the abode of Siva). Find your way to paralōkam (the other world). I gave you milk and fruit. Go to the world of the dead. I gave gingelly (*Sesamum*) and milk. Enter yamalōkam (abode of the god of death). Eleven descendants on the mother's side and ten on the father's, twenty-one in all, may they all enter heaven." He then puts the bricks into the water. On their return home, the sons of the deceased are presented with new clothes.

32. *Totemism, &c.*—So far as I am aware, there is no trace of totemism among Pariyans. Nor do they make fire by friction or flint and steel, though they know how to use flints, but borrow glowing ashes from one another's hearths, should their own fire have gone out.

33. *Tattooing* is practised on women and children of both sexes, but not on grown men. With children the operation is confined to a simple line drawn down the forehead. Among Paraiyans who have become Roman Catholics, the device is sometimes a cross. Women frequently have their arms elaborately tattooed, and sometimes have a small pattern over the breast bone, between the breasts. This tattooing is performed in a primitive fashion. The skin is pricked till the blood comes, and a little blue pigment is rubbed in. The general effect is not unpleasant.

34. *Dress.*—The male Paraiyan wears the invariable loin-cloth, and a strip of white cotton cloth, which he may wrap round his waist, roll into a sort of turban, or hang over his shoulders. On great occasion he wears a large turban, and white cotton cloths both round his waist and over his shoulders. The use of any kind of sandal is rare.

The Paraiya woman's dress is a cotton cloth about 48 inches wide, and as long, as gorgeous and as costly as she can afford. This she winds round her waist, bringing one end up from her waist in front, over her bosom and left shoulder, and tucking it in at her waist behind. Small children wear no clothes. Boys begin to wear a loin-cloth, and girls a rag round their waists when they are about five years old. As soon as a girl is eleven or twelve, she begins to wear a corner of this rag across her bosom (see section 16).

35. *Hair.*—Paraiya men have their beards and the hair on the fore part of the head shaved as often as they can afford the luxury. But occasionally they allow their beards and hair to grow, and offer it at the shrine of some favourite deity. Ordinarily moustaches, and the hair at the back of the head are worn. The latter is usually twisted into a knot at the back of the head called in Tamil *kudumi* (குடுமி).

Women wear their hair parted in the middle of the head and gathered into a bundle (கொண்டை) behind the left ear, frequently supplementing it by wisps of false hair, which are sold openly in the bazaars. This chignon

is always worn more to the left than to the right, and is ornamented with flowers on high days. But ordinarily a Paraiya woman allows her hair to remain a frowsy tumbled knot, carelessly gathered together at the back of her head.

Widows do not have their heads shaved.

Girls wear their hair as nature allows it to grow, but the heads of boys are shaved very early, and afterwards at irregular intervals. Paraiya women usually have the hair in the arm-pits shaven.

It is scarcely necessary to add that the barber, himself a Paraiyan, who shaves Paraiyans, shaves none of the higher castes.

36. *Charms and ornaments*; *Scare-crows.*—The small ornament called *tāli* in Tamil, worn round the necks of married women, is the only significant ornament. It indicates that a woman is formally married (see section 19), and that her husband is alive, for it is removed from the neck of a widow.

Sometimes an *arei-mūdi*, shaped like the leaf of the *pūvarasa* tree, (*Thespesia populnea*) made of silver or of silvered brass, is tied round the waist of female infants as an ornament. It has no significance.

Small flat plates of copper called *takudu* (తకుడు), about one and-a-half inches square, costing a *periya panam*, *i.e.*, two and-a-half annas, are frequently worn by children. One side is divided into sixteen squares, in which what look like the Telugu numerals for nine, ten, eleven and twelve are engraved. On the other side a circle is drawn, which is divided into eight segments, in each of which a Telugu letter is inscribed. The precise meaning of these letters was unknown to my informants, but the charm is supposed to protect the wearer from harm coming from any of the eight cardinal points of the Indian compass.

Various other charms, generally small metal cylinders, are worn for the same purpose by adults and children. They are procured from some exorcist (Tam. *mantirakkāran*).

Similar, or the same charms are worn to avoid the baneful influence of the 'evil eye.' To prevent the evil eye from affecting their crops, Paraiyans put up scare-crows in their fields. These are usually small broken earthen pots, whitewashed, or covered with spots of whitewash, or even adorned with huge clay noses and ears, and made

PARAIYANS.

into grotesque faces. These are set up on the end of a pole, to attract the eye of the passer-by from the crop. For the same reason more elaborate figures made of mud and twigs, in human shape, are sometimes set up.

Before wells are sunk, a charmer (Tam. *mantirakkāran*) is called in to recite spells and find a likely spot, cocoanuts are broken, and the milk in them poured out to propitiate the gods of the place.

37. *Occupation.*—The inscription referred to by Mr. Francis (see section 10 (3)) shows that in the eleventh century A.D., Paraiyans were divided into weavers and ploughmen. To-day Paraiyans are agricultural labourers, mostly men without land. Till a score or so of years ago some were actual bond-serfs, and there are instances on record in quite recent years which show that it was no infrequent thing for a Paraiyan to mortgage his son as security for the repayment of a loan. On the other hand some Paraiya families still own much land.

Current Tamil speech and custom divide the landless labouring Paraiyans into *padiyāl* and *kūliyāl*. The *padiyāl* is definitely and hereditarily attached to some land-holding family in the Hindu *grāma*; he can work for no one else; and cannot change masters. His privilege is that in times of drought and famine his master must support him. The *kūliyāl* is a mere day labourer, only employed, and therefore only receiving pay (*kūli*), when required. He has no claim for maintenance in seasons of scarcity; and thus, though no man's serf, he is far worse off than the *padiyāl*. There is, I fear, much reason to believe that there is a tendency on the part of Hindu land-owners to rid themselves of *padiyāls*.

Three communal servants—the digger, *i.e.*, the grave-digger (veṭṭiyan, வெட்டியான்), the watchman (taleiyāri, தலையாரி), and the scavenger (*toṭṭi*, தொட்டி)—are all Paraiyans. The last is regarded as of lower rank than the others. The Veṭṭiyan officiates when a corpse is buried, and also when it is burned. Hence the proverb against meddling in what ought to be left to some one else: Let the Veṭṭiyan and the corpse struggle together (வெட்டியானும் பிணமும் கட்டிப்புரளட்டும்).

In and near large towns, many Paraiyans are horse-keepers, grass-cutters, drivers, domestic servants, and day labourers at all kinds of manual work.

38. *Food.*—The staple food of the Paraiyan is rice, eaten in the usual South Indian fashion with pepper-water, tamarind, garlic, ginger, vegetables, and indeed any condiment or curry that he can get. A kind of millet, called in Tamil *kervaragu*, but more generally known as *rāgi*, (*Eleusine Coracana*) is also used by many, especially when rice is dear. All Paraiyans eat mutton, dried fish, fresh tank fish, pork, and ordinary birds that can be snared or shot, and of course fowls.

Some Paraiyans eat carrion. I have known them even dig up a buffalo that had been buried for several hours, and devour it (see section 10). It is said that even the lowest Paraiyans do not eat the flesh of cows, but leave that to the leather-dressers (Chakkiliyans). Paraiyans do not eat snakes, lizards, rats, or other vermin. In times of famine I have known them dig into ant-hills to rob the ants of their store of grass seeds. This is called 'grass-rice' (Tam. *pilarisi*, பிலரிசி). All Paraiyans drink fermented palm-juice (Tam. *Kallu*, கள்ளு; anglice, 'toddy,') and also arrack when they can afford it.

39. *Proverbs about Paraiyans.*—There are many proverbs in Tamil referring to Paraiyans. Some are used by the Paraiyans about themselves. All seem to be used by the higher castes. The point of most of them lies in their allusion to the Paraiyans' degraded condition. Most of them are in Jensen's *Tamil Proverbs*. The others are in Lazarus' *Dictionary of Tamil Proverbs*. The translations and notes are Mr. Jensen's or my own.

(1) பறையன் பொங்கலிட்டால் பகவானுக்கு ஏறாதா?
If a Paraiyan boils rice, will it not reach God?
i.e., God will notice all piety, even that of a Paraiyan.

(2) பறைச்சி வெற்றிலைபோட்டால் பத்துவிரலும் சுண்ணாம்பு.
When a Paraiya woman eats betel, her ten fingers (will be daubed with) lime.
The Paraiya woman is a proverbial sloven.

(3) பறைச்சி பிள்ளையைப் பள்ளிக்கு வைத்தாலும் பேச்சிலே அய்யே என்னுமாம்.

Though a Paraiya woman's child be put to school, it will say *Ayyé* in its talk.

Ayyé is vulgar Tamil for *Aiyar*, meaning "Sir."

(4) பறைச்சேரி மேளம் கலியானத்துக்கும் கொட்டும், கல் எடுப்புக்கும் கொட்டும்.

The drum from the Paraiya village beats for wedding and for funerals.

Beating the drum for public notices and ceremonies is part of the work of the Veṭṭiyan.

(5) பனைமரத்திற்கு நிழலில்லை, பறையனுக்கு முறையில்லை.

The palmyra palm has no shadow; the Paraiyan has no decency.

A contemptuous reference to Paraiya morality.

(6) இருந்த நாள் எல்லாம் இருந்துவிட்டு, ஊர்ப்பறையனுக்குத் தார வார்த்ததுபோல.

Like letting something remain for a long time, and then pouring water on the village Paraiyan's hands (to take it away).

தார வார்க்க is the ceremony of pouring water into the hands of the accepter of a gift in token of donation.

(7) சுரைப்பூவுக்கும் பறைப்பாட்டுக்கும் வாசனையில்லை.

The gourd flower and the Paraiyan's song have no savour.

Paraiyans use this saying about their own singing.

(8) நண்டு கொழுத்தால் வளையிலே இராது, பறையன் கொழுத்தால் பாயிலே இரான்.

If the crab gets fat, it will not stay in its hole; if the Paraiyan gets fat, he will not stay on his mat.

This proverb appears in other forms, but this is how I have heard it quoted by Paraiyans.

(9) பட்டால் தெரியும் பறையனுக்கு.

If he suffers, a Paraiyan will get sense.

(10) எழுபது சென்றாலும் பறை ஏவினால்தான் செய்யும்.

Though seventy years of age, a Paraiyan will only do what he is compelled.

N.B. பறை is here translated பறையன்.
It might be translated "a drum."

(11) பத்துவிதத்திலும் பறையனே நம்பலாம், பார்ப்பானே நம்பக்கூடாது.

You may believe a Paraiyan, even in ten ways; you cannot believe a Brāhman.

Almost the only saying in favour of the Paraiyan.

(12) ஏன் பறையா என்கிறதை விட, வள்ளுவபறையா என்கிறது மேல்.

What better is it to say 'Valluva Paraiyan' than to say 'Paraiyan'?

i.e., Both are Paraiyans.

See section 30.

(13) ஆயிரம் குதிரையை அறவெட்டின சிப்பாய்தானு இப்போது பறைச்சேரி நாயோடே பங்கமழிகிறான்.

Is the sepoy, who massacred a thousand horse, now living in disgrace with the dogs of the parachēri?

(14) சைவ முத்தையாமுதலியாருக்கு சமைத்துப்போட வள்ளுவ பண்டாரம்.

A Paraiya priest is cook to the vegetarian Muttaiya Mudaliyār!

A reference to the meat-eating habits of the Paraiyans.

(15) வெட்டியானும் பிணமும் கட்டிப்புரளட்டும்.

Let the grave digger and the corpse struggle together.

See section 37.

(16) அதிகாரி வீட்டிலே திருடி தலையாரி வீட்டிலே வைத்ததுபோல்.

Like stealing from the headman's house, and putting (the stolen goods) into the house of the watchman!

See section 37.

(17) ஒளிக்கப்போயும் தலையாரி வீட்டிலா?

If you want to hide yourself, should you go to the watchman's house?

See section 37.

(18) அதிகாரியும் தலையாரியும் கூடி விடியுமட்டும் திருடலாம்.

If the headman and the watchman combine, they can steal till dawn!

See section 37.

(19) தன் பெண்சாதியைத்தான் அடிக்கத் தலையாரியைச் சீட்டுக் கேட்கிறதா?

If one wants to beat his wife, does he ask permission from the watchman?

(20) பறைப்பேச்சு அரைப்பேச்சு.

Paraiyan's talk is half talk.

A reference to Paraiya vulgarisms of speech. See section 6.

(21) பறையனும் பார்ப்பானும் போல.

Like Pariah and Brāhman.

i.e., As different from each other as possible.

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[The numbers refer to the sections.]

THE LEGEND OF NANDAN.

[Translated from the prose version in the *Periyapūrana Vasanam* by the Rev. A. C. Clayton.]

" There was a man named Nandan, a Pulaiyan by caste, living in Athanur, in the Melkā district on the banks of the Kollidam (Coleroon) river in the kingdom of the Chōlas. He forget all other things, and would only think on the holy feet of the Supreme Śīva (*Paramasīvan*). Because he was a grave-digger, he made a living by the crop that grew in the portion of land that was the perquisite of the man who did the grave-digging in that village, and did the work he ought to do. He provided the skin and the sinews for stretching the skin on the *perikei* (a drum made by stretching skin over a large iron bowl) and other drums with one skin, and for the *mattalam* and other drums with skin at both ends, and strings for *veenas* and *yaru* (a kind of *vīna* or South Indian guitar), and pigment (*gorochana*) for use in worship in the temples. He used to stand outside the entrance to temples, and with increasing love (*anbu*) would dance and sing (in honour of the deity). One day, when he was in Tiruppunkūr and was doing reverence to the god (*svāmi*), desirous of rendering holy homage he thought to himself " Oh that I could go and stand in the very entrance to the shrine, and see and do homage directly in the presence of the god ! " Then the god, according to his desire, caused the image of the bull (*ïdapatevan*), which is placed as warden before the entrance to temples, and prevents profane glances from those who have no right to enter the shrine from falling on the god, to move to one side, and graciously gave sight of himself to his worshipper.

[This casual reference to the exclusion of Paraiyans from Saivite shrines points to the essential difference of cultus. The out-castes were not admitted to the shrines of Sīvan mentioned in this and other legends, because in origin they were the shrines of a higher, perhaps conquering race. On the other hand the lower cultus greatly influenced the higher, as a study of the modern forms of village *dēvata*-worship shows.]

Then Nandan, seeing a depression in the ground at that holy place, dug a tank for the temple, and went to his own village. In this way he went to many holy places, and did homage.

One day he felt a desire to go to Sithambaram, and by reason of the strength of that desire he could not sleep all that night. At dawn he mourned, saying "If I go to Sithambaram, my caste has no fitness to entitle me to enter the holy temple there."

[Sithambaram is one of the most holy, if not the holiest, of all Saiva shrines.]

Then he said "But even this is the grace of the god." Then he stayed where he was, but afterwards, by reason of the increase of his desire, he said "I will go on the holy day." Thus did he delay many days, saying "I will go on the holy day; I will go on the holy day;" and so he got the name "*Tirunāleipóvār*" or "He will go on the holy day."

Then one day, being impelled by the desire to see Sithambaram, having set out from his own village, he reached the border of Sithambaram; and, having entered the gateway of the wall surrounding that town, he saw the sacred fire-sacrifice (*ōmam* Sankr. *hōma*) being made in the houses of the Brāhmans of the place. Then he was afraid to enter the place, and, having done reverence (*namaskāram*), he made a circuit of the boundary of the holy place.

[Tamil *valam* Sankr. *pradakshina* circumambulation of a temple or person, always keeping it or him to the right.]

Having done this night and day, considering the while on the impossibility of his entering (the holy precincts), Tirunāleipovār said to himself "How can I ever obtain sight of Sīva, the Lord of the Assembly (*i.e.*, of the holy ones in Sithambaram)? This degrading birth of mine (*i.e.*, the fact that I am a Paraiyan) is the hindrance, and so with sorrow he went to sleep. Then the Lord of the Assembly, willing to show grace to him and drive away his sorrow, appeared to him in a dream and graciously said to him "In order to avert the disgrace of thy birth thou must bathe in fire; having risen thou wilt come into our presence even along with Brāhmans." Then the god also appeared in a dream to the Holy Ones at Sithambaram, and commanded them to prepare the fire for Tirunāleipovār, and then disappeared.

The whole company of the Holy Ones at Sithambaram, when they awoke and arose and were assembled in the entrance to the shrine, said to each other "We will do according to the command of the Lord of the Assembly," and then they went to Tirunāleipovār and said "We have come to prepare fire for thee now by the command of the Lord of the Assembly." Having heard that, Tirunāleipovār said "I thy servant am blessed," and did reverence. Then the Brāhmans prepared the fire in a pit before the gate under the tower (*gōpuram*), outside the south wall, and announced it to Tirunāleipovār. Then he came to the place where the pit of fire was, and there he meditated in his mind on the holy feet of the Lord of the Assembly, and made a circuit round it, and worshipped, and entered it. Then this saint (*Nāyanār*) lost his old body, and obtained the form of a meritorious Brāhman sage, and arose wearing the sacred thread and his hair in the fashion of an ascetic. The Holy Ones of Sithambaram, and certain other Saivite devotees, saw this, and did reverence (*anjali*), being very joyful. Then Tirunāleipovār went in their company, approached the tower of the temple (*i.e.*, over the gateway), did reverence to it, rose up, entered the shrine, and reached the 'Golden Hall.' After that the Brāhmans and the rest of those who were there saw him no more, and marvelled much and praised (Sīvan). Thus the Lord of the Assembly allowed (Nandan the Pulaiyan called) Tirunāleipovār to approach his holy feet (lit. gave his holy feet to Tirunāleipovār).

A. C. CLAYTON.

SOME AGRICULTURAL CEREMONIES IN MALABAR.

The three great national festivals in Malabar are Ōnam, Vishu and Tiruvātira.

Of these, Vishu, the feast of the vernal equinox, is celebrated on the first of the Malabar month Mēdom between the 10th and 14th of April. To the Tamulians it is the New Year's day, but to the people of Malabar it marks the commencement of the new agricultural year. A Malabar agricultural proverb says "No hot weather after Vishu." The first thing seen on the morning of Vishu day is considered as an omen for the whole year. Every Malaiyāli takes care, therefore, to look on an auspicious object. Arrangements are accordingly made to have a kani, which means a sight or spectacle. In the preparation of this the following articles are absolutely necessary:—

Clean rice.
A clean newly-washed cloth.
A grandham (sacred book of cadjan).
Flowers of the konna tree (*Cassia Fistula*).
A cucumber.
A fruit called kōvaka (*Cephalandra indica*).
A cocoanut cut in two.
Mangoes.
Jāk fruit (*Artocarpus integrifolia*).
Gold jewelry.
Coins.
A bell-metal mirror (not glass).

On the evening before the festival, all these articles are arranged, in a particular order, inside a bell-metal vessel, which is covered with konna flowers. Oil is poured into the cocoanut cups, and lamp wicks are inserted therein. One of the members of the family sleeps close to the vessel, and gets up about two hours before dawn. A bell-metal lamp with five wicks, and the cocoanut lamps are then lighted, and the other members of the family called. Every one—man, woman and child—washes the hands, feet and face, smears sacred ashes over the body, and puts on new white cloths. One by one the members of the family are brought in to

have a look into the kani, and the elders may be heard warning those who are coming for the "first sight" to keep their eyes tightly closed. When near the kani, the subject is made to sit on a grass mat spread beside it, facing east. He is then told to hold the sides of the vessel, and look carefully at its contents. After the first sight, the elders make presents of money to the junior members of the family and the servants. Inauspicious objects for the first sight are similar to those ordinarily recognised as bad omens. To see, therefore, a single Brāhman, a woman with a broom-stick, a buffalo, etc., is believed to forebode ill-luck. Among animals, to see a jackal is considered very lucky; so much so that if a man has a run of good luck on a particular day, it is common to hear people exclaim "Was it a fox that he had as a first sight?" To see a cat, on the contrary, is considered unlucky.

After the distribution of money, the most important function on Vishu morning is the laying of the spade-furrow as a sign that cultivation operations have commenced. A spade, decorated with konna flowers, is brought, and a portion of the yard on the north side smeared with cow-dung and painted with powdered rice-water. An offering is made on the spot to Ganapathi (Ganēsa), and a member of the family, turning to the east, cuts the earth three times.

A ceremony on a grander scale is called the Chāl, which literally means a furrow, for an account of which we must begin with the visit of the astrologer (Kanisan) on Vishu eve. Every dēsam (hamlet) in Malabar has its own astrologer, who visits families under his jurisdiction on festive occasions. Accordingly, on the eve of the new agricultural year, every Hindu house in the district is visited by the Kanisans of the respective dēsams, who, for a modest present of rice, vegetables and oils, make a forecast of the season's prospects, which is engrossed on a cadjan (palm-leaf). This is called the Vishu phalam, which is obtained by comparing the nativity with the equinox. Special mention is made therein as to the probable rainfall from the position of the planets—highly-prized information in a district, where there are no irrigation works or large reservoirs for water. But the most important item in the forecast is the day and time at which the first ploughing is to take place. The chāl is one of the most impressive and solemn of the Malabar agricultural ceremonies, and, in its most orthodox form, is now prevalent only in the Palghāt tāluk. Other visitors on Vishu day are the

carpenter with a plough, the blacksmith with a plough-share and a spade, and the basket-maker with a basket, to each of whom a present of rice, vegetables, and oils is made.

At the auspicious hour shown in the forecast, the master of the house, the cultivation agent and Cherumars (agrestic slaves) assemble in the barn. A portion of the yard in front of the building is painted with rice-water, and a lighted bell-metal lamp is placed near at hand with some paddy (unhusked rice) and rice, and several cups made of the leaves of the kanniram (*Strychnos Nux vomica*), as many cups as there are varieties of seed in the barn. Then, placing implicit faith in his gods and deceased ancestors, the master of the house opens the barn-door, followed by the Cheruman with a new painted basket containing the leaf cups. The master then takes a handful of seed from a seed-basket and fills one of the cups, and the cultivating agent, head Cheruman, and others who are interested in a good harvest, fill the cups till the seeds are exhausted. The basket, with the cups, is next taken to the decorated portion of the yard. A new plough-share is fastened to a new plough and a pair of cattle are brought on to the scene. Plough, cattle and basket are all painted with rice-water. A procession proceeds to the fields, on reaching which the head Cheruman lays down the basket, and makes a mound of earth with the spade. To this a little manure is added, and the master throws a handful of seed into it. The cattle are then yoked, and one turn is ploughed by the head Cheruman. Inside this at least seven furrows are made, and the plough is dropped to the right. An offering is made to Ganapathi, and the master throws some seed into a furrow. Next the head Cheruman calls out "May the gods on high and the deceased ancestors bless the seed which has been thrown broadcast, and the cattle which are let loose; the mother and children of the house, the master and the slaves. May they also vouchsafe to us a good crop, good sunshine, and a good harvest." A cocoanut is then cut on the plough-share, and from the cut portions several deductions are made. If the hinder portion is larger than the front one, it augurs an excellent harvest. If the nut is cut into two equal portions, the harvest will be moderate. If the cut passes through the eyes of the nut, or if no water is left in the cut portions, certain misfortune is foreboded. The cut fragments are then taken with a little water inside them, and a leaf of the tulsi plant (*Ocimum sanctum*) dropped in. If the leaf turns to the right, a prosperous harvest is assured;

whereas, if it turns to the left, certain calamity will follow. This ceremonial concluded, there is much shouting, and the names of all the gods may be heard called out in a confused prayer. The party then breaks up, and the unused seeds are divided among the workmen.

The actual sowing of the seed takes place towards the middle of May. The local deity who is responsible for good crops is Cherukunnath Bhagavathi, who is also called Annapūrana, and is worshipped in the Chirakkal taluk. Before the seed is sown, a small quantity, according to the capacity of the family, is set apart as an offering to the goddess Annapūrna Īswari. By July the crops should be ready for harvesting, and the previous year's stock is running low. Accordingly, several ceremonies are crowded into the month Karkitakam (July-August). When the sun passes from the sign of Gemini to Cancer, *i.e.*, on the last day of Mithuna (June-July), a ceremony called the driving away of Potti (evil spirit) is performed in the evening. The house is cleaned, and the rubbish collected in an old winnowing basket. A woman rubs oil on her head, and, taking the basket, goes three times round the house, while children run after her, calling out Potti, phoo (run away, evil spirit). On the following morning the good spirit is invoked, and asked to bless every householder and give a good harvest. Before dawn a handful of veli, a wild yam (*Caladium nymphæiflorum*) and turmeric, together with ten herbs called dasapushpam (= ten flowers), such as are worn in the head by Nambūtiri Brāhman ladies after the morning bath, are brought in. They are—

(1) Nilappana (*Curculigo orchioides*).
(2) Karuka (*Cynodon Dactylon*).
(3) Cherupoola (*Ærua lanata*).
(4) Muyalchevi (*Emelia sonchifolia*).
(5) Puvamkurunthala (*Vernonia cinerea*).
(6) Ulinna (*Cardiospermum Halicacabum*).
(7) Mukutti (*Biophytum sensitivum*).
(8) Thiruthāli (*Ipomœa sepiaria*).
(9) Kannunni (*Eclipta alba*).
(10) Krishnakananthi (*Evolvulus alsinoides*).

Each of the above is believed to be the special favourite of some god or goddess, *e.g.*, Nilappana of the god of riches, Thiruthāli of the wife of Kāma, the god of love, etc. They are stuck in the front eaves of every house with some cow-dung. Then, before daybreak, Sri Bhagavathi is formally

installed, and her symbolical presence is continued daily til the end of the month Karkitagam. A plank, such as is used by Malaiyālis when they sit at meals, is well washed and smeared with ashes. On it are placed a mirror, a potful of ointment made of sandal, camphor, musk and saffron, a small round box containing red paint, a goblet full of water, and a grāndham (sacred book of cadjan), usually Dēvi-Mahāthmyam, *i.e.*, song in praise of Bhagavathi. By its side the ten flowers are set. On the first day of Karkitagam in some places, an attempt is made to convert the malignant Kāli into a beneficent deity. From Calicut northward this ceremonial is celebrated, for the most part by children, on a grand scale. From early morning they may be seen collecting ribs of plantain leaves, with which they make representations of a ladder, cattle-shed, plough and yoke. Representations of cattle are made from the leaves of the jāk tree (*Artocarpus integrifolia*). These are placed in an old winnowing basket. The materials for a feast are placed in a pot, and the toy agricultural articles and the pot are carried round each house simultaneously three times, while the children call out "Kalia, Kalia, Monster, Monster, receive our offering and give us plenty of seed and wages, protect our cattle and bulls, and support our fences." The various articles are then placed under a jāk tree, on the eastern side of the house if possible.

The next important ceremony is called the Nira, or the bringing in of the first-fruits. It is celebrated about the middle of Karkitagam. The house is cleaned, and the doors and windows are cleansed with the rough leaves of a tree called pārakam (*Ficus hispida*) and decorated with white rice-paint. The walls are whitewashed, and the yard is smeared with cow-dung. The ten flowers (desapushpam) are brought to the gate of the house, together with leaves, etc., of the following:—

Athi (*Ficus glomerata*).
Ithi (*Ficus infectoria*).
Arayāl (*Ficus religiosa*).
Péral (*Ficus bengalensis*).
Illi (Bamboo tender leaves).
Nelli (*Phyllanthus Emblica*).
Jāk (*Artocarpus integrifolia*).
Mango (*Mangifera indica*).

On the morning of the ceremony, the priest of the local temple comes out therefrom, preceded by a man blowing a

conch shell. This is a signal for the whole village, and every householder sends out a male member, duly purified by a bath and copiously smeared with sacred ashes, to the fields to gather some ears of paddy. Sometimes the paddy for the nira is brought from the temple, instead of the field. It is not necessary to pluck the paddy from one's own fields. Free permission is given to gather it from any field in which it may be ripe. When the paddy is brought near the house, the above said leaves are taken out from the gate-house, where they had been kept overnight, and the ears of paddy laid thereon. The bearer thereof is met at the gate by a woman of the house with a lighted lamp. The new paddy is then carried to the house in procession, those assembled crying out: "Fill, fill; increase, increase; fill the house; fill the baskets; fill the stomachs of the children." In a portion of the verandah, which is decorated with rice-paint, a small plank, with a plantain leaf on it, is set. Round this the man who bears the paddy goes three times, and, turning due east, places the burden on the leaf. On the right is set the lighted lamp. An offering of cocoanuts and sweets is made to Ganapathi, and the above said leaves and ears of paddy are attached to various parts of the house, the agricultural implements, and even to trees. A sumptuous repast brings the ceremony to a close. At Palghāt, when the new paddy is carried in procession, the people say: "Fill like the Kottāram in Kozhalmannam; fill like the expansive sands of the Pērār." Now this Kottāram is eight miles west of Palghāt. According to Dr. Gundert, the word means a store-house or a place where temple affairs are managed. It is a ruined building with crumbling walls, lined inside with laterite, and outside with slabs of granite. It was the granary of the Maruthūr temple adjoining it. The story goes that the supply in this granary was inexhaustible.

The next ceremony of importance is called Puthari (meal of new rice). In some places it takes place on nira day, but, as a rule, it is an independent festival, which takes place before the great national festival, Onam, in August. When the new rice crop has been threshed, a day is fixed for puthari. Those who have no cultivation simply add some grains of the new rice to their meal. An indispensible curry on this day is made of the leaves of *Cassia Tora*, peas, the fruit of puthari chundanga (*Swertia Chirata*) brinjals (*Solanum Melongena*) and green pumpkins. The first crop is now harvested. There are no special ceremonies connected

with the cultivation of the second crop, except the one called Chēttotakam in the month of Thulam (November) which is observed in the Palghāt taluk. It is an offering made to the gods, when the transplantation is completed, to wipe out the sins the labourers may have committed by unwittingly killing the insects and reptiles concealed in the earth. The god, whose protection is invoked on this occasion, is called Muni. No barn is complete without its own Muni, who is generally represented by a block of granite beneath a tree. He is the protector of cattle and field labourers, and arrack, toddy, and blood form necessary ingredients for his worship. In well-to-do families a goat is sacrificed to him, but the poorer classes satisfy him with the blood of a fowl. The officiating priest is generally the cultivation agent of the family, who is a Nāyar, or sometimes a Cheruman. The goat or fowl is brought before the god, and a mixture of turmeric and chunām sprinkled over it. If the goat or fowl shakes, it is a sign that the god is satisfied. If it does not, the difficulty is got over by a very liberal interpretation of the smallest movement of the animal, and a further application of the mixture. The god who ensures sunshine and good weather is Mullan. He is a rural deity, and is set up on the borders or ridges of the rice fields. Like Muni, he is confined to the Palghāt taluk, and is propitiated by the sacrifice of a fowl. Other deities responsible for the weal or woe of the cattle are Mundian and Parakutti. The former is an incarnation or sakti of Sīva, and is worshipped in the good or bad form with or without arrack, toddy and blood. When a cow has calved, pollution is observed for ten days. She is milked only on the eleventh day. The whole of the milk drawn on that day is boiled with rice, and made with sugar into a payasam, which is offered to Mundian in the good form, or with arrack, toddy and the sacrifice of a fowl in the bad form. The offering is made by a member or even servant of the family in the night, and, when the pūja is over, all retire, leaving the spot free for Mundian to come and partake of the offering. Parakutti is a malignant deity, and he is, as the name signifies, the Paraiyan god. Blood, arrack and toddy are absolutely necessary in his worship.

The second crop is harvested in Makaram (end of January), and a festival, called Uchāral (corresponding to the Februations of the Romans) is observed from the twenty-eighth to the thirtieth in honour of the menstruation of mother

earth, which is believed to take place on those days, which are observed as day of abstinence from all work, except hunting. The first day is called the closing of Uchāral. Towards evening some thorns, five or six broom-sticks, and ashes are taken to the room where the grain is stored. The door is closed, and the thorns and sticks are placed against it, or fixed to it with cow-dung. The ashes are spread before it, and during that and the following day no one will open the door. A complete holiday is also given to the Cherumans. On the second day cessation from work is scrupulously observed. The house may not be cleaned, and the daily smearing of the floor with cow-dung is avoided. Even gardens may not be watered. On the fourth day the Uchāral is opened, and a basketful of dry leaves is taken to the fields, and burnt with a little manure. The Uchāra days are the quarter days of Malabar, and demands for surrender of property may be made only on the day following the festival, when all agricultural leases expire. By the burning of leaves and manure on his estate, the cultivator, it seems to me, proclaims to the world that he remains in possession of the property. In support of this view, we have the practice of a new lessee asking the lessor whether any other person has burnt dry leaves in the field. By a liberal interpretation of the term "the day after the Uchāral," the Courts have extended the period of demand up to the Vishu, *i.e.*, the day of the vernal equinox. The Uchāral festival is also held at Cherupulcherri, and at Kanayam near Shoranur. Large crowds assemble with representations of cattle in straw, which are taken in procession to the temple of Bagavathi with the usual beating of drums and the shouting of the crowd.

No books have been consulted in the preparation of this paper, and no ceremony has been described, which has not actually been seen by me.

C. KARUNAKARA MENON, B.A.

MADRAS GOVERNMENT MUSEUM.

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THE VILLAGE DEITIES OF SOUTHERN INDIA.

With Seven Plates.

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PREFACE.

The following pages are the fruit of leisure hours on my frequent tours through many districts in South India. I desire to acknowledge with grateful thanks the assistance given me in collecting information by the Tahsildars, police officers and other officials in every place that I have visited, to Mr. Thurston for kindly revising the proofs, and to Mr. K. Rangachari, of the Madras Museum, for supplying the illustrations. Where I have borrowed from the writings of others, my debt has been acknowledged in the bulletin itself. I will only add that this is only intended to be a small contribution to a very wide subject, and to suggest lines of investigation to others, who are interested in it. I have been led to put into print the materials gathered primarily for my own information, by the fact that I have been unable to find any regular treatise on this important part of what is vaguely called Hinduism. There are many descriptions of particular ceremonies, scattered about in Museum bulletins, District Manuals and Gazetteers: but I have not heard of or found anything like a systematic account of the village deities in any work on the religions of India. I hope, therefore, that this slight sketch will supply a real need, and stimulate further enquiry into a subject that is full of interest, and of no small importance to the student of comparative religion.

HENRY MADRAS.

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THE VILLAGE DEITIES OF SOUTHERN INDIA.

INTRODUCTION.

The worship of Village Deities, Grāma-Dēvata as they are called in the vernacular, forms an important part of the conglomerate of religious beliefs, customs and ceremonies, which are generally classed together under the term Hinduism. In almost every village and town of South India may be seen a shrine or symbol of the Grāma-Dēvata, and in every village the Grāma-Dēvata is periodically worshipped and propitiated.

As a rule the shrine of the village deity is far less imposing than the Brahmanical temples in the neighbourhood; very often it is nothing more than a small enclosure with a few rough stones in the centre, and often there is no shrine at all; but still, when calamity overtakes the village, when pestilence or famine or cattle-disease make their appearance, it is to the village deity that the whole body of the villagers turn for protection. Sivà and Vishnu may be more dignified beings, but the village deity is regarded as a more present help in trouble, and is more intimately concerned with the happiness and prosperity of the villagers. The origin of this form of Hinduism is lost in antiquity; but it is probable that it represents a pre-Aryan religion, more or less modified in various parts of South India by Brahmanical influence, and it is possible that some details of the ceremonies may point back to a totemistic stage of religion. At the same time, many of the deities themselves are of quite recent origin, and it is easy to observe a deity in the making even at the present day.

The District Superintendent of Police at Ellore, in the Telugu country, told me that in 1904, at a village some twelve miles from Ellore, two little boys, minding cattle in the fields, thought they heard the sound of trumpets proceeding from an ant-hill. They told the story in the village, and at once the people turned out and did *puja* to the deity in the ant-hill. The fame of the deity's presence

spread like wild fire far and wide, and the village became the centre of pilgrimages from all the country round about. Every Sunday as many as five thousand people, men and women, assembled before the ant-hill, and might be seen prostrate on their faces, rapt in adoration. The incident illustrates the ease and rapidity with which a local cult springs up in India, and suddenly becomes popular over a large district.

Another instance came to my notice a few years ago at Bezwāda. A small boy, the son of well-to-do parents, was murdered near the town for the sake of his ornaments, and thrown into the canal. The body was discovered and placed under a tree near the bank of the canal, at a place where three roads meet. A little after, a small shrine, about a foot and-a-half high, was built by the parents under the tree to the spirit of the murdered boy. Then some one declared that he had made a vow at the shrine, and obtained his desire. The fame of the shrine at once spread, the spirit of the boy rose quite to the rank of a minor deity, and a local worship speedily sprang up and became popular. When I last saw the shrine, it had been enlarged, and had become about twice its original size.

Mr. Harrison, the C.M.S. Missionary at Bezwāda, gave me an instance of the way in which local cults arise out of notorious crimes. About sixty years ago a Hindu widow, named Ramamma, lived between Bezwāda and Hyderabad, farming some land left her by her husband. After a time she contracted immoral relations with one of her servants named Buddha Sahib. Her brother was so angry that he murdered them both. Then the cattle plague broke out, so the villagers connected it with the wrath of the murdered Ramamma, and instituted special rites to pacify her spirit. And now, whenever there is cattle plague in the district, two rough wooden images about two feet high are made to represent Maddha Ramamma and Buddha Sahib, and, with two images of local goddesses as their attendants, are put on a small wooden cart and dragged in procession at night round all the principal streets of the village, accompanied by nautch girls, fireworks and music. Finally the cart is dragged to the boundary of the village lands and thrown into the territory of the adjacent village, in order to transfer to it the angry spirit of Ramamma. Compared to this proceeding, which is very common in the ceremonies connected with the propitiation of village deities, throwing

snails into your neighbour's garden is a charitable pastime. It is the general custom to pay special reverence to the spirits of any persons who come to an untimely end, *e.g.*, to the spirits of girls who die before marriage; but, when the circumstances of their death specially strike the imagination of the general public, the reverence, that is ordinarily confined to the family, expands into a regular local cult.

The special features which broadly distinguish the worship of the village deities from that of SIVA and VISHNU are—

(i) Firstly, the fact that the village deities, with very few exceptions, are female. In the Tamil country, it is true, almost all the village goddesses have male attendants, who are supposed to guard the shrine and carry out the commands of the goddesses; and one male deity, IYENAR, has a shrine to himself, and is regarded as the night watchman of the village. In the Telugu country, too, there is a being called POTU-RĀZU, who figures sometimes as the brother and sometimes as the husband of village goddesses, and sometimes as an attendant. But with the exception of IYENAR, and one or two other deities, all the male deities are so distinctly subordinate to the goddesses that they do not contravene the general principle that village deities are female and not male.

(ii) Then, in the second place, the village deities are almost universally worshipped with animal sacrifices. Buffaloes, sheep, goats, pigs and fowls are freely offered to them, sometimes in thousands. In the Tamil country, as I shall describe later, this custom is curiously modified by the influence of Brahmanism, which has imbued the villagers with the idea that the shedding of blood is low and irreligious, and it is to be remarked that no animal sacrifices are ever offered to IYENAR. MADURAI-VĪRAN accepts them eagerly, and takes toddy and cheeroots into the bargain; but IYENAR is regarded as far too good a being to be pleased by the sight of blood-shed.

(iii) Then, in the third place, the PUJĀRIS, *i.e.*, the men who perform the worship and officiate as priests, are not Brahmans, but are drawn from all the other castes.

It is hardly ever possible to make any general statement about any subject in India without at once being confronted with facts, which seem to prove that you are wrong. Accordingly, I may mention that I have found cases where Brahmans are officiating as Pujāris at the shrines of village

deities. I came across one such case at NEGAPATAM; while, at BANGALORE I actually found a case where a Brahman widow was the Pujāri. But, then, in these cases the Brahman Pujāri never has anything to do with the animal sacrifices. These are always conducted entirely by men of lower castes, and even so, it is a degradation for a Brahman to be connected, as Pujāri, with a shrine where such abominations take place; but according to the Indian proverb:—"for the sake of one's stomach one must play many parts." Setting aside these exceptional cases, it may be stated generally that no Brahmans are the priests of village deities, but that the Pujāris are drawn from all other castes indiscriminately, while an important part in the worship, especially that connected with the buffalo sacrifices, is even taken by the Pariahs, the outcaste section of Indian society.

As will be seen later on, the buffalo sacrifice has special features of its own, and seems to retain traces of a primitive form of worship, which may possibly have originated in totemism.

These three features, then, distinguish the worship of the village deities from the worship of SIVA and VISHNU, since in the latter the officiating priests are nearly always Brahmans, no animal sacrifices are ever offered, and the principal deities are male and not female.

The village deities are not, then, to be regarded as offshoots of the Aryan deities: they represent a form of religion that was widely prevalent in India long before the Aryan invasion.

NAMES, CHARACTERS AND FUNCTIONS.

The names of village deities are legion. Some of them have an obvious meaning, many are quite unintelligible to the people themselves and I have often failed to get any clue to their origin, even from native pundits. They differ in almost every district, and often the deities worshipped in one village will be quite unknown in other villages five or six miles off. In MASULIPATAM, on the east coast in the Telugu country, the following were given me as the names of the village deities worshipped in the district, viz., MUTYALAMMA, the pearl goddess (AMMA is only a female termination); CHINNINTAMMA, the goddess who is head of the house; CHALLALAMMA, the goddess presiding over buttermilk; GHANTALAMMA, the goddess who goes with bells;

Yaparamma, the goddess who transacts business; Mamillamma, the goddess who sits under a mango tree; Gangamma, the water goddess, who in this district is the protectress against small-pox.

But, at a village about twenty miles from Masulipatam, I found that fifteen different goddesses were worshipped in the neighbourhood, of whom only four were identical with those of Masulipatam. Some were named after the villages from which they had been imported, *e.g.*, Addankamma, the goddess from Addanki, and Pandilamma, the goddess from Pandil; others had names derived from common objects of country life, *e.g.*, Wanamalamma, the goddess of the tope, and Bandlamma, the goddess of the cart; and Sitalamma, the water goddess.

In the Ellore District further west the deities worshipped are chiefly Gangamma, who is sometimes called Mahalakshmi and sometimes Chamalamma (the latter a name of Parvati, the wife of Siva, and the former the name of Vishnu's wife), and Poleramma, the boundary goddess, and Ankamma, who is regarded as the goddess of cholera, and disease generally.

Further west than Ellore, across the hills, in the Cuddapah and Kurnool Districts, the village goddess is often known simply as Peddamma (great goddess) or Chinnamma (little goddess). In many villages, however, of these districts these names are unknown and the village deities are called Gangamma, Polamma and Sunkalamma, etc. In some villages, the village deities consist of Potu-Rāzu and his seven sisters, who are known by various names. In one village they were given me as Peddamma, Isondamma, Maremma, Ankalamma, Nukalamma, Vasukota, Ellamma and Arikamma.

Potu-Rāzu is a mysterious person in the Telugu country; sometimes he is described as the brother, sometimes as the husband of the village goddess, and sometimes as only an attendant. Once I was told he was the Devil's younger brother, and occasionally the villagers seem to think that the less said about him the better. But I have never met with him as an independent deity, and have always been told that sacrifice is never offered to him alone, but always in conjunction with one or more of the goddesses.

The characters of the goddesses vary considerably. The villagers do not regard them as evil spirits, but neither do they regard them as unmixed benefactors. They are

rather looked upon as beings of uncertain temper, very human in their liability to take offence. At COCANADA the PUJĀRIS told me that the village goddess, who is significantly called NUKALAMMA from a colloquial Telugu word meaning broken rice, causes all sorts of trouble, and is dreaded as an evil spirit. But, when an epidemic of cholera breaks out, they, curiously enough, instal another goddess, called MARIDI-AMMA, in her place, and offer sacrifices to her instead of to NUKALAMMA, a proceeding calculated, one would have thought, to give dire offence.

The functions of the different goddesses are not at all clearly marked in the TELUGU country. The people often told me "They are only different names for the same goddess." In some places there is a special cholera goddess, *e.g.*, ANKAMMA, and in others a special small-pox goddess, *e.g.*, GANGAMMA; but as a rule the infliction and removal of epidemics and disasters is a general function of all goddesses alike. On the other hand in the COIMBATORE, TANJORE and TRICHINOPOLY Districts of the TAMIL country, where the people have been for many generations past far more influenced by civilization and BRAHMANISM than in the TELUGU country, I found that the functions of different deities were far more differentiated, and that often elaborate stories were current as to their origin and characters, *e.g.*, one of the deities worshipped in almost every village in the TAMIL country is MARIAMMAN or MARI, the goddess of small-pox, and one of the stories as to her origin runs as follows. One of the nine great RISHIS in the olden days, named PIRUHU, had a wife named NAGAVALLI, equally famed for her beauty and virtue. One day, when the RISHI was away from home, the TIRUMURTHI (The Hindu Triad, BRAHMA, VISHNU and SIVA) came to visit her, to see whether she was as beautiful and virtuous as reported. Not knowing who they were and resenting their intrusion, she had them changed into little children. They naturally took offence and cursed her, so that her beauty faded away, and her face became dotted with marks, like those of the small-pox. When PIRUHU returned and found her thus disfigured, he drove her away, and declared that she should be born a demon in the next world and cause the spread of a disease, which would make people like herself. In memory of the change, which PIRUHU found in her, she was called MARI ("changed") in the next birth. When she was put away, it is said that a washerman took care of her, and that in consequence she was also called UPPAI (a washerman's oven). I may remark that a totally

different derivation of the word MARI was given me in Mysore.

Again KĀLI AMMAN or KĀLI is said to be the only one of the village goddesses whose name is found in the VEDAS. She is an avatar, or incarnation of the eight powers of the universe. The story told about her is that a demon named MAHISHASURAN (the buffalo demon) gave great offence to SIVA, and was condemned to death. But, owing to a privilege bestowed on him by SIVA himself, he could not be slain by the TIRUMURTHI or by any male deity, so the task was given to KĀLI, who successfully accomplished it, and so won a place among village deities.

MAHA KĀLI is another form or avatar of the same goddess. She is supposed to be a deity of furious temper, and to be the cause of the prevalence of cholera. She is also known as VĪRAMAN-KĀLI or UGGRAMAN-KĀLI, to denote her rage and fury.

Another deity of similarly violent temper is ANGALAMMAN, who is worshipped largely in the COIMBATORE District. The idea seems to be that all who worship the ASHTA SAKTI or eight powers of the universe will attain to bliss, while the others will be destroyed by ANGALAMMAN. The people worship her to avoid falling victims to her unquenchable anger, since her main object is believed to be to devour and consume everything that comes in her way. She is said especially to have a great relish for bones!

Another deity of a very different disposition is KAMATCHI AMMAN, whose name implies that she is full of good and gracious qualities. She is reported to have been born a Brahman girl, and then to have become the avatar or incarnation of one of the ASHTA SAKTI.

Another benevolent deity is THUROPATHI AMMAN, who is reported to have been the wife of a RISHI and a very virtuous woman, so, in her next birth, she was allowed to be born a king's daughter. Accordingly, when THURUPATHAM, king of PANCHALA, offered a *puthrayagam* (*i.e.*, a sacrifice to obtain a child) she came forth from the fire. She afterwards became the wife of the PANDAVAS, the seven brothers famous in the great Hindu epic, the MAHABHARATA, and is regarded as one of the ASHTA SAKTI (or eight powers).

A deity of rather mixed character, who is worshipped largely in parts of the COIMBATORE District, is KANNAHAI AMMAN. She seems originally to have come from Madura.

The story goes that in MADURA during the palmy days of the PANDYA Kingdom, many centuries ago, PANDIAN was ruling very wickedly, and in the height of his power and presumption closed the temple of MINATCHI AMMAN, the renowned local deity. She was enraged at this and, with a view to taking vengeance, became reincarnate. At the same time PANDIAN, who greatly desired to have a child, found the deity, incarnate as a little infant, lying in the palace with a very curious bracelet on her wrist, which was the exact copy of one belonging to his wife. He wished to adopt the child, but the astrologers warned him that she would bring evil into his house, so he ordered her to be put into a basket and cast into the river. A Chetti (merchant) picked the basket out of the river and brought the child up, and called her KANNAHAI. Just before this, it happened that the god SIVA was incarnate as a Chetti and was living at KAVERIPUMPATINAM, a village at the mouth of the river KAUVERI in the TANJORE District. Having heard of the girl's story and mysterious origin, he came and married her. After some years they fell into extreme poverty, and the Chetti, in spite of his wife's remonstrances, took her strange bangle and went off to MADURA to sell it. There he was arrested on the charge of stealing the bracelet, which exactly resembled the one belonging to PANDIAN's wife, that had been lost. He was brought before PANDIAN and put to death. In a few days KANNAHAI went there, heard what had happened, took the form of a THURGAI, *i.e.*, an evil goddess, and slew PANDIAN. The slaughter of PANDIAN is regarded as having only whetted her appetite for bloodshed, and it is considered prudent to propitiate her.

An example of the way in which the deity of an aboriginal family might become the deity of a conquering race, and acquire a widespread popularity, is seen in the history of KONI AMMAN in the COIMBATORE District. The story goes that at a very remote date, when the tract now occupied by the town of COIMBATORE was forest land, inhabited by aboriginal hill-tribes known as MALAISAR (dwellers in the mountains), a certain man, named KOYAN, who was of some repute among the aborigines, dwelt there and worshipped a goddess who was called, after his name, KOYAN-AMMAN. The name was gradually changed, first into KOVAI-AMMAN, and then into KONI-AMMAN. After some years she became the village deity of the MALAISAR, and a temple was built in her honour, with a stone image of the goddess in front of it. In course of time a HINDU king, named MATHE-RAJAH,

happened to go there on a hunting expedition and, finding the spot very fertile, colonized the country with his own subjects. Gradually a flourishing town grew up, and KONI-AMMAN was adopted as one of the deities of the new colony. Centuries afterwards TIPPU SULTAN, the Tiger of Mysore, when he passed by the town during one of his marches, broke down the image and demolished the temple. The glory of persecution greatly increased the fame of the goddess. The head, which had been broken off the image, was brought back to the town, a new temple built, and in a few years the goddess became very popular over the whole district Her title to divine honours rests upon the legend that she killed a certain demon, who was devastating the land, and took the form of a buffalo when he attacked her. She is regarded as a benevolent being who does not inflict diseases, but is capable of doing much good to the people when duly honoured. She is only worshipped at COIMBATORE, the TAMIL name of which is KOYAMPUTHUR.

Some of the legends bear witness to the bitter conflict between the aboriginal inhabitants of the land, generally described as demons or RAKSHASHAS, and the superior races which conquered them, whether TURANIAN or ARYAN.

The legend of SAVADAMMA, the goddess of the weaver caste in the COIMBATORE District, is a case in point. It runs as follows:—Once upon a time, when there was fierce conflict between "the men" and the RAKSHASHAS, "the men," who were getting defeated, applied for help to the god SIVA, who sent his wife PARVATI, as an avatar or incarnation, into the world to help them. The avatar enabled them to defeat the RAKSHASHAS and, as the weaver caste were in the forefront of the battle, she became the goddess of the weavers and was known in consequence as SAVADAMMAN, a corruption of SEDAR AMMAN, SEDAR or CHEDAR being another title for the weavers. It is said that her original home was in the North of India near the HIMALAYAS.

Another deity, whose worship is confined to a particular caste in South India, and about whom a similar legend is told, is KANNIKA PARAMESWARI, the goddess of the KŌMATIS or traders. The story goes that in ancient days there was bitter hatred between the KŌMATIS, who claim to belong to the VAISYA caste, and the MLECHAS or barbarians. When the KŌMATIS were getting worsted in the struggle for supremacy they requested PARVATI, the wife of SIVA, to come and deliver them. It so happened that about that

time PARVATI was incarnate as a girl of the KŌMATI caste, who was exceedingly beautiful. The MLECHAS demanded that she should be given in marriage to one of their own people, and the refusal of the KŌMATIS led to severe fighting, in which the KŌMATIS, owing to the presence of the avatar of SIVA among them, were completely victorious and almost exterminated their enemies. After their victory the KŌMATIS entertained doubts as to the chastity of the girl, and compelled her to purify herself by passing through fire. This she did and disappeared in the fire, resuming her real shape as PARVATI, and taking her place beside SIVA in heaven. Her last words were a command to the KŌMATIS to worship her, if they wished their caste to prosper.

The following account of the village goddesses in the neighbourhood of TANJORE was given to me by one of the local pujāris, through the Rev. Isaac Daniel, Vice-Principal of St. Peter's College, TANJORE. "The presiding goddesses of the large class of tutelary deities are seven sisters; who are regarded as emanating from PARVATI, the wife of SIVA. Their names are—

(1) SENKALATCHI-AMMAN or PIDĀRI, (2) KODI-AMMAN, (3) UKKIRANI-AMMAN, (4) AKARI-AMMAN, (5) VANCHI-AMMAN, (6) SELLI-AMMAN, (7) KUNTHAN-AMMAN.

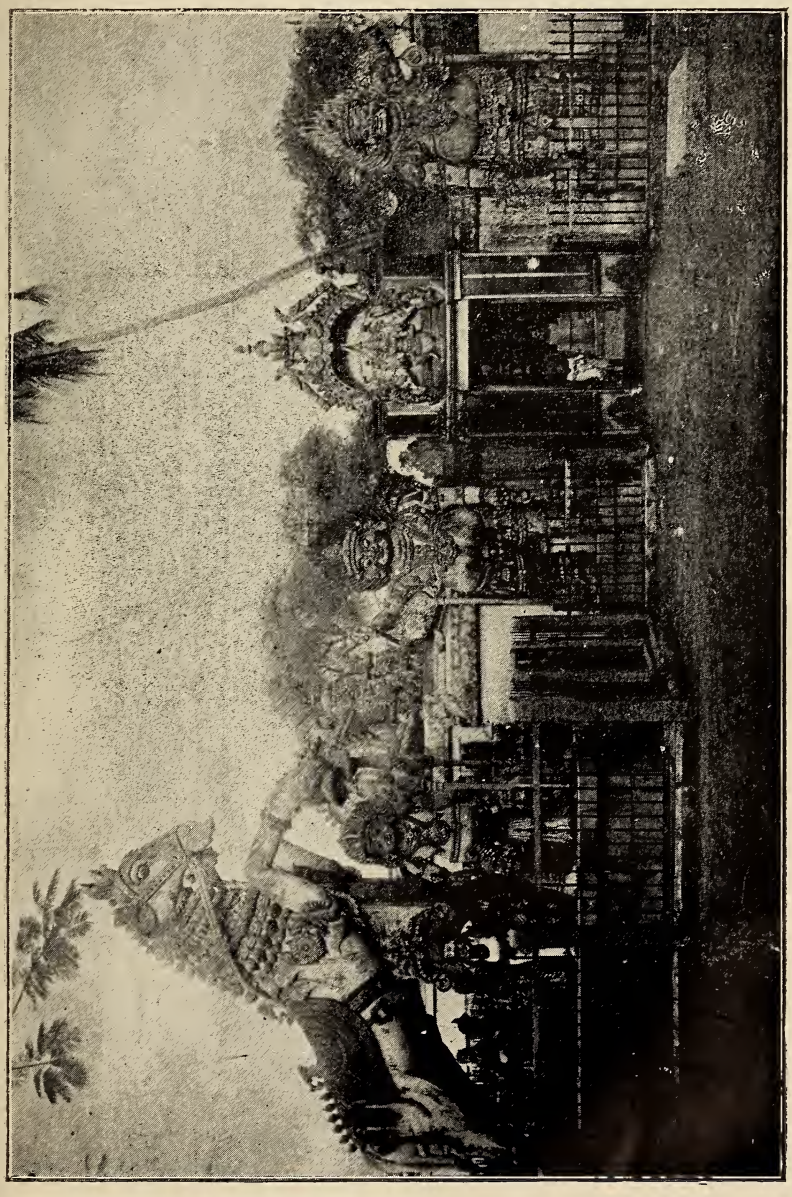
"As each one of these is regarded as the head of the village deities, their shrines are not found together in any temple, but each has a separate temple to herself. Associated with them are various male attendants; on one side various forms of the god KARUPPAN, and on the other MADURAI-VĪRAN, who is also called VĪRABATHRAN and VĪRAN, while in front stands MUNADIAN the guardian of the shrine.

"The god IYENAR has a separate shrine, generally about a hundred yards from that of SENKALATCHIAMMAN or PIDĀRI. He is regarded as the brother of the seven sisters, and as being far superior to the ordinary male attendants, MADURAI VĪRAN, KARUPPAN and MUNADIAN. He is represented as a Rishi with flowing locks of hair, and is supposed to exercise some authority over his sisters.

"In the shrines of the seven sisters, VIGNESWARA or GANESH, the son of SIVA and PARVATI, is always associated with the goddess herself and his image stands beside hers.

"This is another sign of the tendency to connect the worship of the village goddesses with that of SIVA. First, they are regarded as emanations from or incarnations of

Plate XIV.



IYENAR TEMPLE.

PARVATI, the wife of SIVA, and then GANESH, the elephant-headed son of SIVA, is associated with them. The process is the more natural that GANESH is especially the averter of evils, as his name VIGNESWARA signifies, and the bringer of blessings and good fortune, while it is the distinctive function of the seven sisters to ward off any evil or calamity from the village or their worshippers.

"It is noticeable that MARIAMMAN, the goddess of small-pox, is not found in any temples dedicated to one of the seven sisters, as she is considered superior to them in power and much worse in temper. The seven sisters are supposed to be kind and indulgent, while MARIAMMAN is vindictive and inexorable, and difficult to propitiate.

"The boundary goddess is worshipped in these parts under the name of KĀLI, and her special function is to prevent any evil coming from without into the village of which she is the guardian, while the seven sisters are supposed to guard against any evil arising within the village itself."

In the TAMIL districts of TANJORE, TRICHINOPOLY and CUDDALORE the names of village deities most commonly met with are PIDĀRI, which is often used as a generic name of village deities, MARIAMMAN, KĀLI, SELI AMMAN, DRAUPATI and ANGAL AMMAN.

MARIAMMAN is the commonest of them all, and her function is always, to inflict or ward off small-pox.

PIDĀRI is supposed to act as guardian against evil spirits and epidemics, especially cholera.

KĀLI is often regarded as especially the protectress against evil spirits that haunt forests and desolate places, and against wild beasts. In some parts she is the special goddess of the bird-catchers. But in some villages she is also the guardian against cholera. Except, however, in the villages near TANJORE, I have not met with KĀLI in the capacity of a boundary goddess. In other places there are curious ceremonies connected with the boundary-stone, ELLAI-KAL as it is called, and I was told in one village that in the boundary-stone reside evil spirits, which it is the object of the ceremonies to propitiate. In another village I found that there was a festival to a goddess called ELLAI-PIDĀRI.

Next to MARIAMMAN, the deity that is most universally worshipped among the Tamils is IYENAR, and he is the one village deity, largely worshipped in the TAMIL country, who

seems to be an exception to the general rule that the village deities are female. In almost every TAMIL village there is a shrine of IYENAR, who is regarded as the watchman of the village, and is supposed to patrol the village every night, mounted on a ghostly steed, a terrible sight to behold, scaring away the evil spirits. He has always a separate shrine, and is not, like MUNADIAN and MADURAI-VĪRAN, simply an attendant of a local goddess. His shrine may be known by the figures of clay or concrete horses ranged on either side of the image, or piled about in the compound (grounds) of the shrine in admired confusion. The horses are offered by devotees, and represent the steeds on which he rides in his nightly rounds. He is regarded by the villagers as a good and benevolent protector, of far higher character than the disreputable MADURAI-VĪRAN.

Another male deity, of much inferior character to IYENAR, who is sometimes worshipped separately, is KARUPPAN As a rule he is simply one of the subordinate male attendants of the village goddess : but in some places I have met with separate shrines to KARUPPAN, where he presides as the chief deity. At one of these shrines worship was offered exclusively by PARIAHS. At another place the evil spirit residing in the boundary-stone was called ELLAI-KARUPPU.

In another village in the TRICHINOPOLY District I came across a male deity known as RĀJA VAYAN (King Father) who was represented by four or five stakes, about five or six feet high with iron spear heads on the top. The spears were stuck on one side of a stone platform under a tamarind and aresa tree, and reminded me of the wooden stakes representing POTU-RĀZU in the TELUGU country. In one shrine belonging exclusively to the PARIAHS of a village, I found that the chief deities were all male and not female. Whether these independent and semi-independent male deities have in all cases developed out of the subordinate male attendants, or whether they are accretions on the system of village deities from some other phase of Hinduism, it is difficult to say.

At BELLARY, in the CANARESE country, the three village deities chiefly worshipped are DURGAMMA, UR-AMMA, SUNKALAMMA and MAREMMA. UR-AMMA seems to be, like PIDĀRI in Tamil Districts, a generic name for village goddesses (Ur = village). An ASĀDI (hereditary pujāri) of a village called KAPPAGALU in the BELLARY TALUQ, who was a MĀDIGA (the lowest section of the Pariahs), gave me the

IYENAR TEMPLE.

Plate XV.

following account of the origin of the deity UR-AMMA, which he said he had learnt from his "elders." The story is one which, with many variations, I came across in MYSORE, and in many parts of the TELUGU country as well.

In ancient days, the story runs, there lived a KURNAM (village magistrate) in a village to the East. He was blind, and had only one daughter. A Pariah, well versed in the VĒDAS, came to the village in the disguise of a BRAHMAN. The elders of the village were deceived, and induced the blind KURNAM to give his daughter to him in marriage, that he might succeed to the office of KURNAM in due time. The marriage was celebrated by Brahman rites, and the KURNAM's daughter bore sons and daughters to her Pariah husband, without any suspicion arising in her mind as to his origin. After a time a native of the Pariah's own village came to the place where they were living, and recognised the Pariah disguised as a BRAHMAN. Seeing, however, that he was a man of influence, he said nothing to the villagers, but went and told the Pariah's old mother. As he was her only son, the old woman set out in search of him and came to the village where he lived, and sat down by the well used by caste people. The Pariah happened to go there, and recognised his mother: so he took her to a barber, had her head shaved, passed her off as a Brahman widow, and brought her to his house, telling his wife that she was his mother and was dumb. He took the precaution to strictly enjoin her not to speak, lest her speech should betray them. One day the wife ordered a meal with a dish called SAVIGAHI (wheat flour baked with sugar and made into long strings) as a mark of respect to her mother-in-law. During the meal the mother, forgetting the injunction of silence, asked her son what the SAVIGAHI was, saying it looked like the entrails of an animal. The wife overheard the remark, and her suspicions were aroused by the fact that her mother-in-law could speak, when her husband had said she was dumb, and did not know a common Brahman dish like SAVIGAHI; so she watched their conduct, and felt convinced that they belonged to a low caste and were not BRAHMANS at all. Accordingly, she sent her children to school one day, when her husband was away from home, managed to get rid of the mother-in-law for a few hours, and then set fire to the house and burnt herself alive. By virtue of her great merit in thus expiating the sin she had involuntarily committed, she reappeared in the middle of the village in a divine form, declared that the villagers had done her a great wrong by

marrying her to a Pariah, and that she would ruin them all. The villagers implored mercy in abject terror. She was appeased by their entreaties, consented to remain in the village as their village goddess, and commanded the villagers to worship her. When she was about to be burnt in the fire, she vowed that her husband should be brought before her and beheaded, that one of his legs should be cut off and put in his mouth, the fat of his stomach put on his head, and a lighted lamp placed on the top of it. (These are details of the buffalo sacrifice, as will be described later on, and this part of the story was evidently composed to explain the ritual, of which the true meaning had long been forgotten.) The villagers therefore seized the husband, stripped him naked, took him in procession round the village, beheaded him in her presence, and treated his leg and the fat of his stomach as directed. Then her children came on the scene, violently abused the villagers and village officers, and told them that they were the cause of their mother's death. The deity looked at her children with favour, and declared that they should always be her children, and that without them no worship should be offered to her. The Asādis claim to be descendants of these children, and during the festivals exercise the hereditary privilege of abusing the villagers and village officers in their songs. After being beheaded, the husband was born again as a buffalo, and for this reason a buffalo is offered in sacrifice to Ur-Amma.

In the Mysore country I came across quite a different set of names for the village goddesses. At one village near Bangalore the name of the goddess was Mahesvaramma, also called Savaramma (she who rides on horseback). Her sister Dodamma and her brother Munesvara share in the worship paid to her. At another village a goddess, called Pujamma (she who is worshipped), was shown to me. She was said to be the local goddess of the Mādigas, the lowest section of the Pariahs, but at the same time the Sudras make vows to her, to induce her to ward off diseases from their homes, and then fulfil their vows by sacrificing buffaloes or thrusting silver pins through their cheeks. Annamma is the principal goddess at another shrine in Bangalore city, and in the same shrine are six other deities, Chandeshveramma, Mayesveramma, Maramma (the cholera goddess), Udalamma (she of the swollen neck), Kokkalamma (the goddess of coughs), Sukhajajamma (the goddess of measles and small-pox).

At some villages a little distance from BANGALORE the deity was called simply the GRĀMA-DĒVATA, *i.e.*, the village goddess. In MYSORE city the GRĀMA-DĒVATA is known as BISAL-MARIAMMA (BISAL in Canarese = sunlight, and I was told that MARI = SHAKTI or power). The deity seems to have been originally connected with sun worship. I was told that her shrines are never covered over with a roof, and one of the symbols representing the deity is a brass pot full of water with a small mirror leaning against it, called KANNA-KANNADI (KANNA = eye, KANNADI = mirror).

There are seven MARI deities, all sisters, who are worshipped in MYSORE, viz.—

BISAL-MARI—the sun.
GOORAL-MARI—asthma.
KEL-MARI—an earthen pot.
HIRI-DĒVATA, the eldest sister.
IRUNGERE-MARI, CHĀMUNDISWARI, and UTTANAHALLI.

All the seven sisters are regarded vaguely as wives or sisters of SIVA.

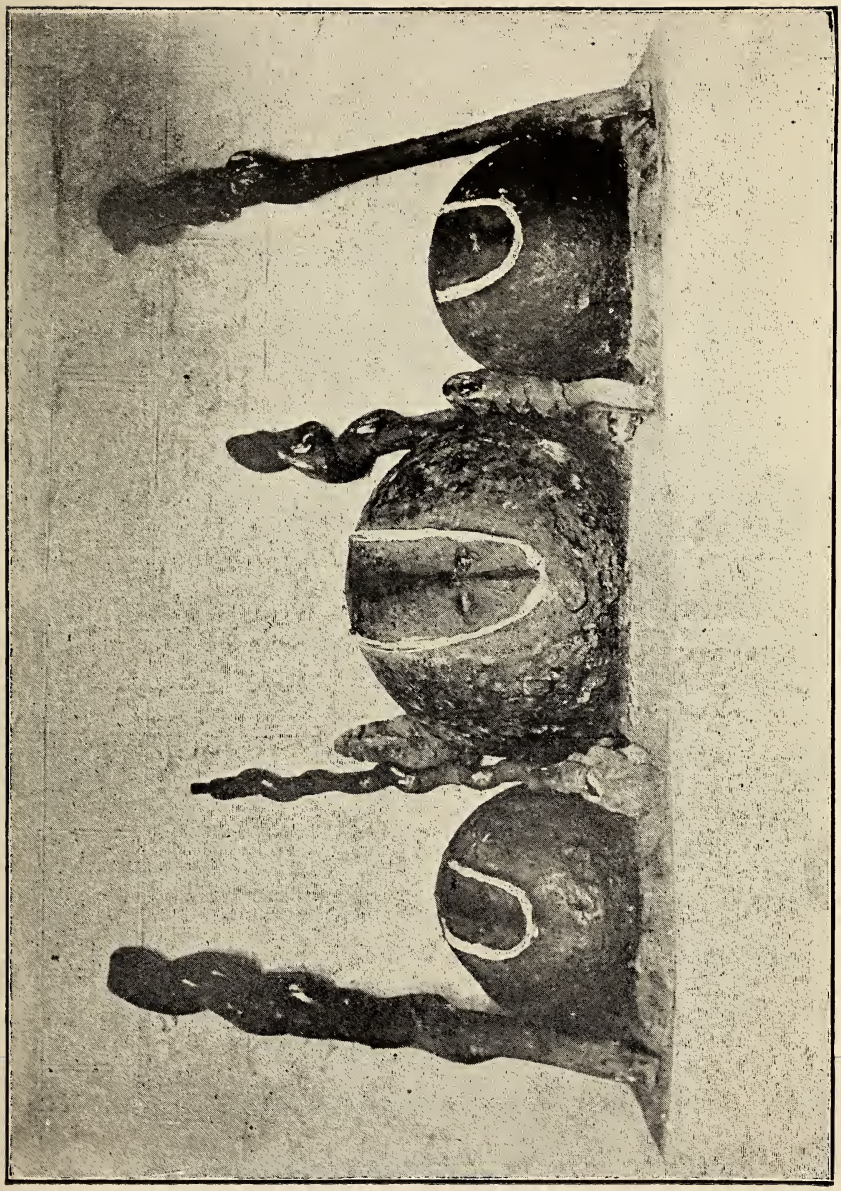
Another goddess worshipped in MYSORE is MĀHA DĒVA-AMMA, the great goddess, and doubtless there are countless other names in the MYSORE STATE, for the many deities who are worshipped as the guardians of the villages and the averters of epidemics and other misfortunes.

It is quite probable that originally in South India the village goddesses had all quite simple names, such as UR-AMMA or GRĀMA-DĒVATA or PEDDAMMA, *i.e.*, village goddess, or great mother, and that the imagination of the villagers gradually invented special titles for their own guardian deities. But at the present time the village deities consist of a most miscellaneous collection of spirits, good, bad and indifferent, who baffle all attempt at classification, enumeration or explanation. A few of them, like MARIAMMAN and IYENAR, have won their way to general respect or fear among the TAMIL people, and, where Brahman influence is strong, there has been an obvious attempt to connect the village goddesses with the popular worship of SIVA or VISHNU; but it is more than doubtful whether, originally, they had anything to do with either SAIVISM or VAISHNAVISM. The stories told about them in the folk lore of the people, which represent them as avatars of SIVA, were probably quite late inventions, to account for names and ceremonies whose meaning had long been lost.

SYMBOLS AND IMAGES.

The images or symbols, by which the village deities are represented, are almost as diverse as their names. In some of the more primitive villages there is no permanent image or symbol of the deity at all; but a clay figure of the goddess is made by the potter for each festival and then cast away beyond the boundaries of the village, when the festival is ended. In other villages the deity is represented simply by a stone pillar standing in a field, or on a stone platform under a tree, or in a small enclosure surrounded by a stone wall. Often the stones, which represent the different deities, are simply small conical stones not more than five or six inches high, blackened with the anointing oil. It is difficult to see anything at all peculiar in them, which in any way fits them to be symbols of the goddesses or their male attendants. In more civilized parts a slab of stone has the figure of a woman roughly carved upon it, sometimes with four, six, or eight arms, holding various implements in her hands, sometimes with only two arms, and sometimes with none at all. Here is the description of a typical image which I saw in the TRICHINOPOLY District. It was a stone figure of a woman, about two and-a-half feet high with eight arms, and in her hands a knife, a shield, a bell, a devil's head, a drum, a three pronged fork, a goad, and a piece of rope :—truly a collection of articles worthy of a school-boy's pocket! Another image of the goddess made of the five metals (gold, silver, brass, copper and lead), was kept, strangely enough, in the temple of SIVA, about 200 yards off, for use in processions. It is very common in the TAMIL Districts to find a stone image fixed in the shrine, and a small portable metal image, which is used in processions during the festival: very often, too, the goddess is represented in processions by a brass pot filled with water and decorated with margosa leaves. I saw one of these brass pots in a shrine of KALIAMMAN at SHIYALI, in the TANJORE District. It was about a foot high and a foot in diameter at the base, and had four tubes sticking out just below the neck. In other TAMIL villages, where the image is fixed in the shrine and there is no metal image to carry in procession, an earthenware pot is used, filled with water and decorated with margosa leaves. At IRUNGALORE, in the TRICHINOPOLY District, I found a small enclosure, sacred to KARUMBAI-AMMAN, outside the village, without any image or sacred stones in it at all, and I was told that during the festival a small pandal (*i.e.*, booth) of leaves is erected in the enclosure, under which a small earthen pot, curiously decorated, is

Plate XVI.



KENCHARAYA OF KADUR REPRESENTED BY STONE.

placed to represent the goddess. The pot is filled with water, and has a silver two anna piece (2*d.*) put inside it. Some cocoanut and oleander flowers are stuck in the mouth of the pot, surrounded and concealed by a sheaf of mango leaves, tied together by tender shoots of the plantain tree. This bunch of mango leaves is then decorated with flowers, a small pointed stick of bamboo, with a lime stuck on the end, is inserted at the top of the bunch, and by the side of the lime a small silver umbrella with a silver handle. This decorated pot is placed on a small platform of sand, and about eight measures of rice are heaped round the base of it. It is called KARAGAM (*i.e.*, the pot) and is carefully prepared at the chief local shrine of KARUMBAI AMMAN, about a mile outside the village, and during the festival is treated exactly like the goddess. It is taken round in procession on the head of a PUJĀRI to the sound of tom-toms and pipes; offerings of fruit and flowers are made to it; a lamb is sacrificed before it, and it is worshipped with the orthodox prostrations.

At another village I found that KALIAMMAN was represented by seven brass pots, without any water in them, one above the other, with margosa leaves stuck into the mouth of the topmost pot, as well as by an earthenware pot filled with water and also adorned with margosa leaves. It is possible that the seven brass pots represent seven sisters or the seven virgins sometimes found in TAMIL shrines. The people themselves have no idea what they mean, but can only say that it is "*māmul*," *i.e.*, custom. At MYSORE city I found that the goddess was represented by a small metal pot full of water, with a small mirror leaning against it. In the mouth of the pot two, four, or six betel leaves are placed, always an even number, and the pot is decorated with a bunch of cocoanut flowers. The pot (kalasam) is called KANNA-KANNADI (eye-mirror), and is used, I was told, as a symbol of deity in the preliminary ceremonies of all the BRAHMANS. It is evidently, connected with sun-worship, which in MYSORE seems to have strongly influenced the cult of the village deities.

Another curious symbol used in MYSORE is what is called ĀRATI, which consists of a lump of rice-flower about six or eight inches high, with the image of a face roughly represented on one side of it by pieces of silver and blotches of red powder (KUNKUMA) stuck on to represent the eyes, nose, mouth, etc. Sticks of incense were stuck in the lamp all round, and on the top were about four betel leaves stuck upright and forming a sort of cup with a wreath of white

flowers below them. An ĀRATI was brought to me at MYSORE by the PUJĀRIS for my inspection. It was a quaint object, and seemed like the relic of some harvest festival of bygone days. I was told that a goat would have to be sacrificed to purify it from the pollution which the visit entailed.

A common symbol of the village deities is simply a stick or a spear. It is very common in the TAMIL country to see one or more iron spears stuck in the ground under a tree, to represent some village deity. The idea seems to be that the deity is represented by his weapons. In the TELUGU country POTU-RĀZU, the brother or husband of the village goddess, is often represented by a thin wooden stake, like an attenuated post, about four or five feet high and roughly carved at the top. It faintly resembles a spear, and is called "Sulam" which in TELUGU means "a spear." Sometimes this stake stands beside a slab of stone representing POTU-RĀZU. At one village the symbol of POTU-RĀZU is a painted image made of wood, about three feet high, representing a warrior, sitting down with a sword in his hand, and carrying a lime and nine glass bangles belonging to his sister ELLAMA. Besides each foot is the figure of a cock, and in the shrine is kept a large painted mask for the PUJĀRI to wear at festivals, as he dances round the image of POTU-RĀZU But elaborate images of POTU-RĀZU of this kind are not often found.

The shrines and images of KOGILLU, a village in the MYSORE country not far from BANGALORE, are typical of that part of the country. At the extreme entrance to the village, near a tank, stands a small shrine of stone and mud sacred to the goddess PUJAMMA (she who is worshipped). On the stone door posts are carved figures of serpents. Within the shrine there is no image of any kind, but to the left hand side of the door is a platform about three feet high, and on that another smaller platform, covered with garlands of white flowers, with a small earthenware lamp upon it, which is kept burning day and night as a symbol of the goddess. To the right of this shrine stands a smaller one dedicated to a goddess called DALAMMA. No one in the village could tell me who the goddess was or what her name meant. There was no image or lamp, or symbol of any kind in her shrine. An old picture frame, hung up on the wall to the left, without any picture in it, was the only attempt at decoration or symbolism. Just within the doorway was a shallow trough about one and-a-half feet long, one foot broad and two inches deep, where

MUNESWARA WORSHIP.

Plate XVII.

the worshippers break their cocoanuts. In front of the larger shrine stood an enclosure about five or six yards square, enclosed by a stone wall, with four slabs of stone in the centre, on which a platform is erected, covered by a canopy of cloth and leaves, during the annual festival. The lighted lamp is then brought out from the shrine, placed under the canopy and worshipped as the symbol of the goddess. Apparently cattle are tethered in the enclosure at other times, and, when I saw it, there were no obvious marks of sanctity about it. About twenty yards off stands the "Cattle Stone," a slab of rough stone about five feet high and three feet broad, set up on a stone platform about one and-a-half feet high. When the cattle get sore feet, their owners pour curds over the Cattle Stone for their recovery. Near the Cattle Stone, in a field on the outskirts of the houses, stands a square stone pillar, about five feet high and half a foot in thickness, without any carving or ornament on it whatever. It represents MARAMMA, the goddess of small-pox and other epidemics, a most malignant spirit. Apparently she had been brought to this village by some people, who had migrated from another village called HETHANA; whence she is called MARAMMA-HETHANA. Buffaloes and sheep are offered to her whenever epidemics break out.

The GRĀMA-DĒVATA herself—she has no other name—has no permanent image. The goldsmith makes an image of clay in the form of a woman, about one or one and-a-half feet high, every year at the annual festival, which takes place after harvest, and she is then placed in the centre of the village under a canopy of green boughs. One striking feature of this festival is that on the first day of the festival a woman comes from every household to the place of worship with a lighted lamp made of rice flour (the ĀRATI), and then they all offer their lamps by waving them together in a circle from left to right above their heads, and from right to left below. When the festival is over, the washerman of the village, who acts as PUJĀRI, accompanied by all the villagers, takes the image to the tank, walks into the water about knee deep, and then solemnly deposits the image under the water and leaves it there. In some villages in the MYSORE State the ĀRATI (the lighted lamp made of rice flour) is presented by the men, the heads of the households, and not by the women. But in all the annual festivals in these parts the presentation of the ĀRATI, which seems often to be regarded as a symbol of the deity herself, forms an important part of the ceremonial.

FESTIVALS AND PUJĀRIS.

Festivals.

There is no act of uniformity and no ecclesiastical calendar regulating the festivals or forms of worship of village deities, and no universal custom as to the appointment of Pujāris (officiating priests). In some villages, where there is a permanent shrine, offerings of rice, fruit and flowers, with incense and camphor, are made every day by the villagers, who have made vows to the goddess, through the Pujāri. Often offerings are made once or twice a week, on fixed days, consisting chiefly of grain, fruit, and flowers, and occasionally of goats, sheep and fowls. In many places there is a fixed annual festival, which sometimes takes place after harvest, when the people are at leisure and well off for food. But there is no regular rule as to the time, and the custom varies widely in different districts. In most places, however, there is no regular annual festival, but a sacrifice is held whenever an epidemic or any other calamity occurs, which may make it expedient to propitiate the goddess. In some villages old men have complained to me that, whereas formerly festivals were held yearly, now, owing to the decay of religion, they are only held once in four or five years. So, again, there is no uniformity as to the duration of a festival. Generally it lasts about a week, but in the Tamil country it is sometimes a very elaborate affair, lasting for a fortnight, three weeks, or even a whole month; so too in Mysore City the Mari festival, which is held in February, lasts for about four weeks. But a long festival is an expensive luxury, which only a large town or a well-to-do village is able to afford. Speaking generally, the object of the festival is simply to propitiate the goddess and to avert epidemics and other calamities from the village, and to ward off the attacks of evil spirits. Every village in South India is believed by the people to be surrounded by evil spirits, who are always on the watch to inflict diseases and misfortunes of all kinds on the unhappy villagers. They lurk everywhere, on the tops of palmyra trees, in caves and rocks, in ravines and chasms. They fly about in the air, like birds of prey, ready to pounce down upon any unprotected victim, and the Indian villagers pass through life in constant dread of these invisible enemies. So they turn for protection to the guardian deities of their village, whose function it is to ward off these evil spirits and protect the village from epidemics

of cholera, small-pox or fever, from cattle disease, failure of crops, childlessness, fires and all the manifold ills that flesh is heir to in an Indian village.

The sole object, then, of the worship of these village deities is to propitiate them and to avert their wrath. There is no idea of praise and thanksgiving, no expression of gratitude or love, no desire for any spiritual or moral blessings. The one object is to get rid of cholera, small-pox, cattle disease or drought, or to avert some of the minor evils of life. The worship, therefore, in most of the villages, only takes place occasionally. Sometimes, as I have stated above, there are daily offerings made to the deity; but as a rule, the worship is confined to one big sacrifice. In some villages, this takes place every year, but for the most part, the sacrifice is only held when an epidemic or cattle disease breaks out. The general attitude of the villager towards his village deity is "let sleeping dogs lie." So long as everything goes on well and there is no disease afflicting man or beast, and no drought nor other great calamity, it seems safest to let her alone. But, when misfortune comes, it is a sign that she is out of temper, and it is time to take steps to appease her wrath.

Pujāris.

One of the most striking features of the worship of the village deities is the absence of anything like a sacerdotal caste in connection with it. Every other department of village work belongs to a special caste, and in the ordinary worship of Vishnu and Siva the priestly caste of the Brahmans is supreme. But, in the worship of the village deities, the Pujāris are drawn from all the lower castes indiscriminately, though in any one village the Pujāris of a particular goddess nearly always belong to one particular caste.

I have occasionally found a Brahman in charge of a shrine to a Grāma-Dēvata in the Tamil country, and I found a Brahman widow in charge of a shrine at Bangalore. But, then, as I have noted above, the Brahman Pujāri never takes any part in the animal sacrifices, and, even so, is degraded by his connection with the shrine. In the Telugu country the potters and the washermen, who are Sudras of low caste, often officiate as priests, and an important part, especially in the buffalo sacrifices, is taken by the Mālas and Mādigas, the two sections of the outcaste Pariahs.

A MĀDIGA nearly always kills the buffalo, and performs the unpleasant ceremonies connected with the sprinkling of the blood, and there are certain families among the MĀLAS, called ASĀDIS, who are the nearest approach to a priestly caste in connection with the village deities. They have the hereditary right to assist at the sacrifices, to chant the praises of the goddess, while the sacrifices are being offered, and to perform certain ceremonies. But in the more primitive villages, where, it may be presumed, primitive customs prevail, it is remarkable how great a variety of people take an official part in the worship: the potter, the carpenter, the toddy-drawer, the washerman, Mālas and Mādigas and even the Brahman Kurnam or magistrate, have all their parts to play.

In the TAMIL country this is not so marked, and the details of the worship are left far more to the regular PUJĀRI. It is noticeable that the office of PUJĀRI is by no means an honourable one, and this is especially the case among the TAMILS, where Brahman influence is strong, and the shedding of blood is regarded with aversion. And even among the Brahmans themselves, though they owe their influence to the fact that they are the priestly caste, the men who serve the temples are regarded as having a lower position in the caste than those Brahmans engaged in secular pursuits.

Among the CANARESE in the BELLARY District the ASĀDIS take a similar part in the worship to the ASĀDIS in the TELUGU country. In the whole of the BELLARY District there are about sixty families of them living in three separate villages. They form practically a separate caste or section of the Pariahs. They eat food given them by the MĀDIGAS, and take their girls in marriage. The ASĀDI girls, however, never marry, but are made "BASAVIS," *i.e.*, consecrated to the goddess, and then become prostitutes. Certainly the degradation of religion in India is seen only too plainly in the degradation of the priesthood.

OFFERINGS, SACRIFICES, AND MODES OF PROPITIATION.

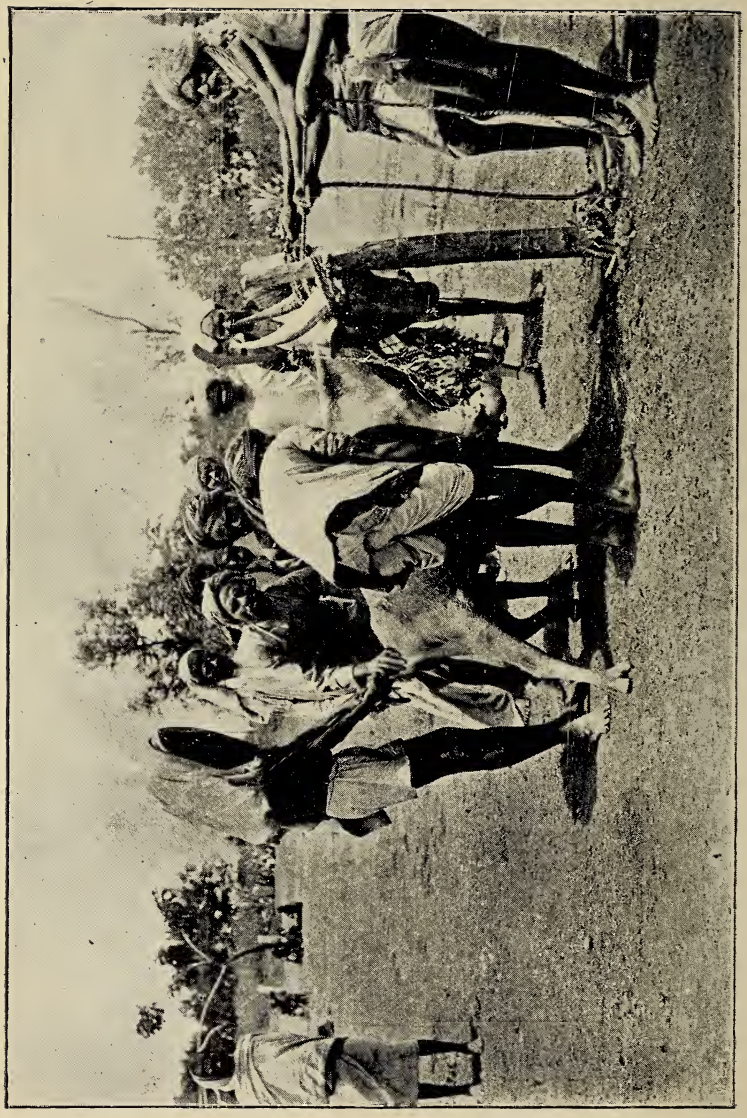
I have dignified the periodical sacrifices to the village goddesses by the name of festivals. But the term is a misnomer. There is really nothing of a festal character about them. They are only gloomy and weird rites for the propitiation of angry deities or the driving away of evil

spirits, and it is very difficult to detect any traces of a spirit of thankfulness or praise. Even the term worship is hardly correct. The object of all the various rites and ceremonies is not to worship the deity in any true sense of the word, but simply to propitiate it and avert its wrath. A brief description of the sacrifices and offerings themselves will make this clear. But I must premise that, as with the names and images and shrines, so with the offerings and sacrifices, there is no law of uniformity, but the variations of local custom and use are innumerable. Still the accounts here given will give a fair idea of the general type of rites and ceremonies prevalent throughout South India, in the propitiation of village deities.

TELUGU.

Let us suppose that an attack of cholera or small-pox has broken out in a village of South India. We will take a village in the TELUGU country, in one of the more backward districts, where life is lived under more primitive conditions than in places where large towns and railways, and the influence of the BRAHMANS have tended to change old-fashioned ideas and customs. The village deity, in this particular village, is called PEDDAMMA, the great mother. The epidemic is a sign that she is angry and requires to be propitiated. So, a collection is made for the expenses of a festival, or a rich man offers to pay all expenses, and a propitious day is selected, which in this village may be any day except Sunday or Thursday. Then the potter of the village is instructed to make a clay image of the great mother, and the carpenter to make a small wooden cart, and a he-buffalo is chosen as the chief victim for the sacrifice. When the appointed day arrives, the buffalo is sprinkled all over with yellow turmeric, while garlands of margosa leaves are hung round its neck and tied to its horns. At about 2 P.M. it is conducted round the village in procession to the sound of music and the beating of tom-toms. The two sections of the PARIAHS or outcastes, the MĀLAS and MĀDIGAS, take the leading part in this sacrifice, and conduct the buffalo from house to house. One MĀDIGA goes on ahead, with a tom-tom, to announce that "the he-buffalo devoted to the goddess is coming." The people then come out from their houses, bow down to worship the buffalo, and pour water over his feet, and also give some food to the MĀLAS and MĀDIGAS, who form the procession. By

about 8 P.M. this ceremony is finished, and the buffalo is brought to an open spot in the village, and tied up near a small canopy of cloths supported on bamboo poles, which has been set up for the reception of the goddess. All the villagers then assemble at the same place, and at about 10 P.M. they go in procession, with music and tom-toms and torches, to the house of the potter, where the clay image is ready prepared. On arriving at his house, they pour about two and-a-half measures of rice on the ground and put the image on the top of it, adorned with a new cloth and jewels. All who are present then worship the image, and a ram is killed, by cutting off its head with a large chopper, and the blood sprinkled on the top of the image, as a kind of consecration. The potter then takes up the idol and carries it out of the house for a little distance, and gives it to a washerman, who carries it to the place where the canopy has been set up to receive it. During the procession the people flourish sticks and swords and spears to keep off the evil spirits, and, for the same purpose, cut limes in half and throw them up in the air. The idea is that the greedy demons will clutch at the golden limes and carry them off, and so be diverted from any attack on the man who carries the image. When the idol has been duly deposited under the canopy, another procession is made to the house of the toddy-drawer. He is the man who climbs the palm trees, and draws off the juice which is made into toddy. At his house some rice is cooked, and a pot of toddy and bottle of arrack are produced and duly smeared with yellow turmeric and a red paste, constantly used in religious worship among the Hindus and called KUNKUMA. The cooked rice is put in front of the pot of toddy and bottle of arrack, a ram is killed in sacrifice, and then the toddy-drawer worships the pot and the bottle. The village officials pay him his fee, $\frac{3}{8}$ of a measure of rice, $\frac{3}{8}$ of a measure of cholam, and four annas, and then he carries the pot and bottle in procession, and places them under the canopy near the image of PEDDAMMA. Then comes yet another procession The people go off to the house of the chief official, the REDDI, and bring from it some cooked rice in a large earthenware pot, some sweet cakes, and a lamb. A large quantity of margosa leaves are spread on the ground in front of the image, the rice from the REDDI's house is placed upon them in a heap, and a large heap of rice, from one hundred to three hundred measures, according to the amount of the subscriptions, is poured in a heap a little further away. All these elaborate proceedings



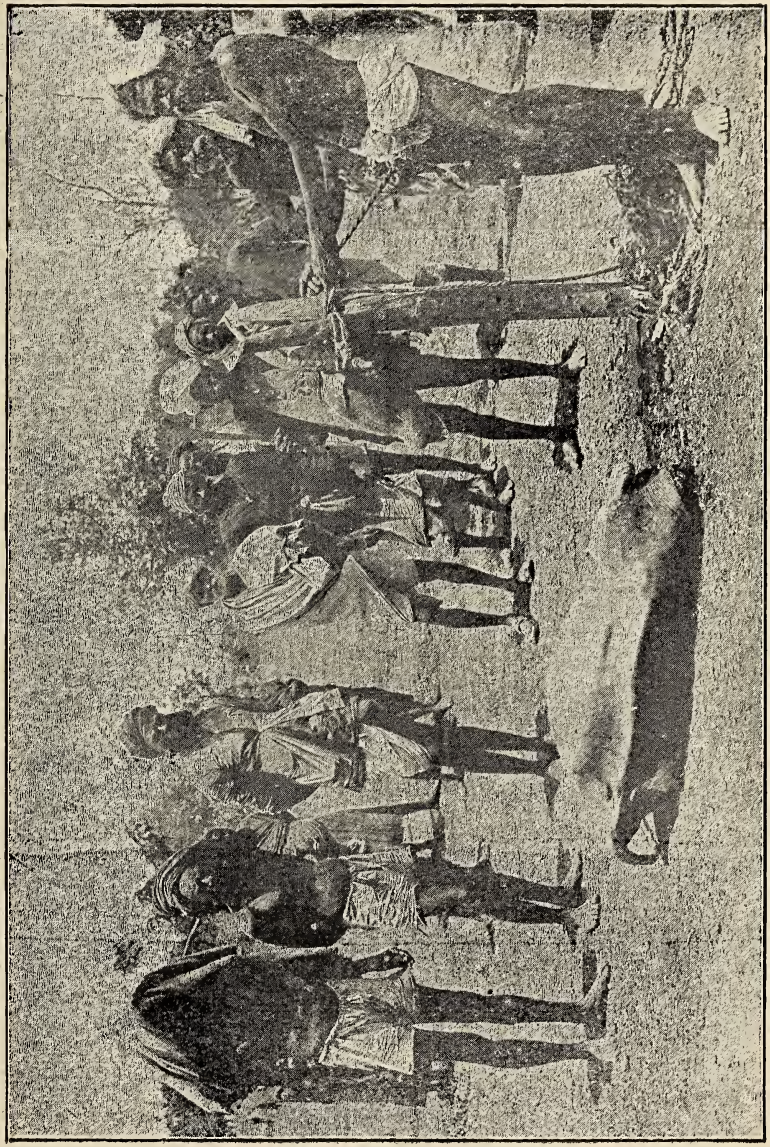
BUFFALO SACRIFICE.

form only the preparations for the great sacrifice, which is now about to begin. The lamb is first worshipped, and then sacrificed by having its throat cut and its head cut off. A ram is next brought and stood over the first large heap of rice, and is there cut in two, through the back, with a heavy chopper, by one of the village washermen. The blood pours out over the rice and soaks it through. One half of the ram is then taken up and carried to a spot a few yards off, where a body of Asādis are standing ready to begin their part in the ceremonies. The other half of the ram is left lying on the rice. The Asādis then begin to sing a long chant in honour of the deity. Meanwhile, the chief sacrifice is made. The he-buffalo is brought forward, and the Mādigas kill it by cutting its throat (in some villages its head is cut off). Some water is first poured over the blood, and then the pool of blood and water is covered up carefully with earth, lest any outsider from another village should come and steal it. The idea is that if any man from another village should take away and carry home even a small part of the blood, that village would get the benefit of the sacrifice. The head of the buffalo is then cut off and placed before the image, with a layer of fat from its entrails smeared over the forehead and face, so as to cover entirely the eyes and nose. The right foreleg is cut off and placed crosswise in the mouth, some boiled rice is placed upon the fat on the forehead, and on it an earthenware lamp, which is kept alight during the whole of the festival. Why the right foreleg should be cut off and placed in the mouth, and what the meaning of it is, I have never been able to discover, nor can I conjecture. When I have asked the villagers, they only reply "It is the custom." But, I have found the custom prevailing in all parts of South India, among Tamils, Telugus and Canarese alike, and it seems to be a very ancient part of the ritual of sacrifice prevailing in South India.

This completes the presentation of the sacrifice to the goddess, who is supposed to delight in the food offered and, especially, in the blood. A great deal of the food offered is, as a matter of fact, taken away by the people and eaten in their homes, but the idea is that the goddess takes the essence, and leaves the worshippers the material substance. This takes till about 3 A.M. next morning, and then begins another important part of the ceremonies. Some of the rice from the heap, over which the ram was sacrificed and its blood poured out, is taken and put in a flat basket, and

some of the entrails of the buffalo are mixed with it. The intestines of the lamb, which was first killed, are put over the neck of a MĀLA, and its liver is placed in his mouth, while another MĀLA takes the basket of rice soaked in blood and mixed with the entrails of the buffalo. A procession is then formed with these two weird figures in the middle. The man with the liver in his mouth is worked up into a state of frantic excitement, and is supposed to be inspired by the goddess. He has to be held by men on either side of him, or kept fast with ropes, to prevent his rushing away; and all round him are the ryots and MĀLAS, flourishing clubs and swords, and throwing limes into the air, to drive away the evil spirits. As the procession moves through the village, the people shout out "Bali, Bali!", and the man who carries the basket sprinkles the rice soaked in blood over the houses to protect them from evil spirits As he walks along he shouts out, at intervals, that he sees the evil spirits, and falls down in a faint. Then lambs have to be sacrificed on the spot and limes thrown into the air and cocoanuts broken, to drive away the demons and bring the man to his senses. And so the procession moves through the village, amid frantic excitement, till, as the day dawns, they return to the canopy, where the great mother is peacefully reposing. At about 10 A.M. a fresh round of ceremonies begins. Some meat is cut from the carcase of the buffalo and cooked with some cholam, and then given to five little MĀLA boys, "SIDDHALU" or "the innocents", as they are called. They are all covered over with a large cloth, and eat the food entirely concealed from view, probably to prevent the evil spirits from seeing them, or the evil eye from striking them. And then some more food is served to the ASĀDIS, who have been, for many hours, during the ceremonies of the night, chanting the praises of the goddess. After this the villagers bring their offerings. The Brahmans, who may not kill animals, bring rice and cocoanuts, and other castes bring lambs, goats, sheep, fowls and buffaloes, which are all killed by the washermen, by cutting their throats, except the buffaloes, which are always killed by the MĀDIGAS, the lowest class of the Pariahs. The heads are all cut off and presented to the goddess. This lasts till about 3 P.M. when the people go off to the house of the village carpenter, who has got ready a small wooden cart. On their arrival some cooked rice is offered to the cart, and a lamb sacrificed before it, and a new cloth and eight annas are given to the carpenter

Plate XIX.



BUFFALO SACRIFICE.

as his fee. The cart is then dragged by the washermen, to the sound of horns and tom-toms, to the place of sacrifice. The heads and carcases of the animals already sacrificed are first removed by the MĀLAS and MĀDIGAS, except the head of the buffalo first offered, which remains in its place till all the ceremonies are finished. The shrine is then removed, and at about 7 P.M. another series of ceremonies begin. First a lamb is sacrificed before the goddess, and its blood mixed with same cooked rice, and at the same time a pig is buried up to the neck in a pit at the entrance of the village, with its head projecting above the earth. The villagers go in procession to the spot, while one of the MĀDIGAS carries the rice, soaked in the blood of the lamb, in a basket. All the cattle of the village are then brought to the place and driven over the head of the unhappy pig, who is, of course, trampled to death; and, as they pass over the pig, the blood and rice are sprinkled upon them to preserve them from disease. Then, after this follows the final ceremony.

The image of the goddess is taken from the canopy by the washerman, and a MĀDIGA takes the head of the buffalo with its foreleg in the mouth, the forehead and nostrils all smeared over with fat, and the earthen lamp still lighted on the top; then they all go in procession to the boundary of the village, first the man carrying the buffalo's head, next the washerman with the image, and last the small wooden cart. When the procession arrives at the extreme limit of the village lands, they go on, for about a furlong, into the lands of the neighbouring village: there the ASĀDIS first chant the praises of the goddess, then some turmeric is distributed to all the people, and finally the image is divested of all its ornaments, and solemnly placed upon the ground and left there. The light on the head of the buffalo is extinguished, and the head itself carried off by the MĀDIGA, who takes it for a feast to his own house. The object of transporting the goddess to the lands of the next village is to transfer to that village the wrath of the deity, a precaution which does not show much faith in the temper of the goddess or much charity towards their neighbours!

A somewhat different form of ceremonial prevails in some of the villages of the TELUGU country nearer the coast. The village of GUDIVADA, about twenty miles from the important town of MASULIPATAM, may be taken as a good specimen of a well-to-do village in a prosperous district, and the

ceremonies prevailing there are a fair sample of the cult of the village deities in these parts.

The name of the village deity at Gudivada is Pallalamma. Her image is the figure of a woman, with four arms and a leopard's head under her right foot, carved in *bas relief* on a flat stone about three feet high, standing in an open compound surrounded by a low stone wall. The Pujāri, who is a Sudra, gave me a full account of the rites and ceremonies. Weekly offerings are made every Sunday, when the Pujāri washes the image with water and soap-nut seeds early in the morning, and smears it with turmeric and kunkuma (a red paste made of turmeric mixed with lime), offers incense, breaks a cocoanut, cooks and presents to the image about a seer of rice, which he afterwards eats himself. The rice is provided daily by the villagers. Occasionally fowls and sheep are offered on the Sunday by villagers, who have made vows in time of sickness or other misfortunes. When a sheep is sacrificed, it is first purified by washing. The animal is simply killed in front of the image by a Mādiga, who cuts off its head with a large chopper. The blood is allowed to flow on the ground, and nothing special is done with it. The head becomes the perquisite of the Pujāri, and the offerer takes away the carcase for a feast in his house. In many villages, both in the Telugu and Tamil Districts, water is poured over the sheep's back to see whether it shivers. If it shivers, it is a sign that the goddess has accepted it. Where the people are economical, they keep on pouring on water till it does shiver, to avoid the expense of providing a second victim, but, where they are more scrupulous, if it does not shiver, it is taken as a sign that the goddess will not accept it and it is taken away.

A public festival is held whenever an epidemic breaks out. The headman of the village then gets a new earthenware pot, besmears it with turmeric and kunkuma, and puts inside some clay bracelets, necklaces, and earrings, three pieces of charcoal, three pieces of turmeric, three pieces of incense, a piece of dried cocoanut, a woman's cloth, and two anna's worth of coppers—a strange collection of miscellaneous charms and offerings. The pot is then hung up in a tree near the image, as a pledge that, if the epidemic disappears, the people will celebrate a festival. When it does disappear, a thatched shed of palmyra leaves is built near the image, and a special image of clay, adorned with turmeric and kunkuma, is put inside with an earthen pot beneath it, filled

Plate XX.

BUFFALO SACRIFICE.

with buttermilk and boiled rice. This pot is also smeared with turmeric and kunkuma, adorned with margosa leaves, covered with an earthenware saucer, and carried in procession through the village during the day, to the exhilarating sound of pipes, horns, and tom-toms, by the village potter, who takes the rice and buttermilk for his perquisite, and renews it every morning of the festival at the public expense. The duration of the festival depends on the amount of the subscriptions, but it always lasts for an odd number of days, excluding all numbers with a seven in them, *e.g.*, 7, 17, 27, etc. During the night the barbers of the village chant the praises of the goddess, and the MĀDIGAS beat tom-toms near the image. On the night before the day appointed for the offering of animal sacrifices by the villagers, a he-buffalo, called Dēvara Potu (*i.e.*, he who is devoted to the deity), is sacrificed on behalf of the whole village. First, the buffalo is washed with water, smeared with yellow turmeric and red kunkuma, and then garlanded with flowers and the leaves of the sacred margosa tree. It is brought before the image and a MĀDIGA cuts off its head, if possible at one blow, over a heap of boiled rice, which becomes soaked with the blood. The right foreleg is then cut off and placed crosswise in its mouth, according to the widespread custom prevailing in South India, the fat of the entrails is smeared over the eyes and forehead, and the head is placed in front of the image. A lighted lamp is placed, not as in the other villages on the head itself, but on the heap of rice soaked with blood. This rice is then put into a basket and carried by a MĀDIGA, the village Vetti or sweeper, round the site of the village, sprinkling it on the ground as he goes. The whole village goes with him, but there is no music nor tom-toms. The people shout out as they go "Bali, Bali!" *i.e.*, "Offering! Offering!" and clap their hands and wave their sticks above their heads to keep off the evil spirits. The rice offered to the goddess, but not soaked with blood, is then distributed to the people. What spirits the rice soaked in blood is supposed to feed is not clear, but the object of sprinkling the blood is evidently to ward off evil spirits and prevent them from coming near the village, and apparently the present idea is that they will be satiated with rice and blood, and not want to do any mischief. The original idea was possibly quite different; but this seems to be the intention of the ceremony in modern times.

On the next day, early in the morning, the clay image and the pot are washed and smeared afresh with turmeric

and kunkuma, incense and boiled rice are then offered as on other days, and the pot is taken in procession round the village. When this has been done, about mid-day, each householder brings his offering of boiled rice, cakes, fruits, and flowers, and, in addition, the village as a whole contributes about two hundred or more seers of rice, which is boiled near the pandal. All these offerings are placed in a heap before the image. Then first a sheep or buffalo is offered on behalf of the whole village. Having been duly washed, and smeared with turmeric and kunkuma, and decorated with margosa leaves, its head is cut off by a MĀDIGA. The blood is allowed to flow on the ground, and some loose earth is thrown upon it to cover it up. The head is offered to the image by the headman of the village. After this various householders bring animals for sacrifice, even BRAHMANS and BUNNIAHS. All are killed by a MĀDIGA, and then the heads are all presented and placed in a heap before the goddess. Sometimes an extraordinary number of animals is sacrificed on occasions of this kind, as many as ten thousand sheep on a single day. In a village like GUDIVADA the number of victims is, of course, far less. The question of precedence in the offering of victims constantly gives rise to quarrels among the leading villagers. When I was last at GUDIVADA, there was a case pending before the Tahsildar, between a zamindar (landowner) and a village Munsiff about this knotty point. The heads are taken away by the PUJĀRIS, potters, washermen, barbers, MĀLAS and MĀDIGAS and others, who take any official part in the sacrifice. The carcases of the private sacrifices are taken away by the offerers, and that of the public victim belongs to the headman of the village. The rice, fruit, etc., are distributed among the various officials. This function lasts from about 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. In the evening a cart is brought to the image with eight pointed stakes standing upright at the four corners and one in the centre: on each stake is impaled alive a young pig, or a lamb, or a fowl. A MĀLA, called a PAMBALA, then sits in the cart dressed in female attire, holding in his hand the clay image of the goddess which was made for the festival. The cart is dragged with ropes to the extreme boundary of the village lands, and both cart and ropes are left beyond the boundary. The PAMBALAS take away the animals, which all die during the procession, as their share of the offerings.

This cruel ceremony of impaling live animals is quite common in the eastern part of the TELUGU country, and I

have come across it in many villages that I have visited. The Rev. F. N. Alexander, the C.M.S. Missionary who has lived just fifty years at Ellore, told me that he witnessed it in the town of Ellore the first year that he went there, and wrote a letter to the *Madras Mail* describing it. As a result of his letter the practice was forbidden by the Government, so now at Ellore the animals are tied on to the stakes without being impaled; but in many villages near Ellore the custom still survives of impaling the unfortunate animals alive. Sometimes there are only four stakes on the cart, sometimes five and sometimes more. It is not often that there are as many as nine.

Sometimes, when there is a cattle disease, much the same ceremonies are performed, only on a smaller scale, or a pig is buried up to its neck at the boundary of the village, a heap of boiled rice is deposited near the spot, and then all the cattle of the village are driven over the head of the unhappy pig. It is not the custom at Gudivada to sprinkle anything on the cattle as they pass over the poor animal as is done elsewhere.

There is a remarkable parallel to this form of sacrifice in a description quoted by Mr. E. Thurston, in his Ethnographical Notes in Southern India, p. 507, of an ancient custom among the Lambādis, a wandering tribe of South India.

"In former times, the Lambādis, before setting out on a journey, used to procure a little child, and bury it in the ground up to its shoulders, and then drive their loaded bullocks over the unfortunate victim. In proportion to the bullocks thoroughly trampling the child to death, so their belief in a successful journey increased."

It is possible that the custom of driving the cattle over the head of a buried pig may be connected with the worship of an agricultural goddess, since in ancient Greece the pig was sacred to agricultural deities, *e.g.*, Aphrodite, Adonis and Demeter; but it may also be a survival of some former custom of infanticide or human sacrifice, such as prevailed among the Lambādis.

I have been told that among the Todas of the Nilgiri hills it was formerly the custom to place female children, whom it was desired to rear, on the ground at the entrance of the mand, and drive buffaloes over them. If they survived this ordeal, they were allowed to live.

It is only fair to add that the Todas themselves deny that this custom ever existed. To quote Mr. Thurston again (*op. cit.* p. 507) :—

"The practice of infanticide, as it prevailed among the Todas of the Nilgiris, is best summed up in the words of an aged Toda, during an interview with Colonel Marshall (A Phrenologist amongst the Todas, 1873). 'I was a little boy when Mr. Sullivan (the first English pioneer of the Nilgiris) visited these mountains. In those days it was the custom to kill children, but the practice has long died out, and now one never hears of it. I don't know whether it was wrong or not to kill them, but we were very poor, and could not support our children. Now every one has a mantle (putkūli), but formerly there was only one for the whole family. We did not kill them to please any god, but because it was our custom. The mother never nursed the child, and the parents did not kill it. Do you think we could kill it ourselves? Those tell lies who say we laid it before the open buffalo-pen, so that it might be run over and killed by the animals. We never did such things, and it is all nonsense that we drowned it in buffalo's milk. Boys were never killed—only girls; not those who were sickly and deformed—that would be a sin; but, when we had one girl, or in some families two girls, those that followed were killed. An old woman (kelachi) used to take the child immediately it was born, and close its nostrils, ears and mouth with a cloth thus (here pantomimic action). It would shortly droop its head, and go to sleep. We then buried it in the ground. The kelachi got a present of four annas (4*d.*) for the deed.' The old man's remark about the cattle pen refers to the Malagasy custom of placing a new-born child at the entrance of a cattle pen, and then driving the cattle over it, to see whether they would trample on it or not."

At Masulipatam, where very similar ceremonies are performed as at Gudivada during an epidemic, a washerman carries the earthenware pot, half full of buttermilk and adorned with margosa leaves, round the village to the sound of tom-toms. As it goes round, the washerman stops at each house, and the wife comes out and pours water beside the pot on the ground and does reverence to the pot, imploring the goddess not to left any evil spirit come to the house; and then she puts more rice and buttermilk into it. When it is full, it is taken back to the shrine, and another brought in its place. As this procession continues for fifteen days, the accumulation of rice and buttermilk must be considerable. It is ultimately consumed by the washermen, potters, Mālas and Mādigas, who take part in the festival. The real sacrifice begins on the sixteenth day and lasts for a month. Cotton-thread and all the rice and buttermilk collected from

the villagers are offered to the image. The images themselves are smeared with turmeric, and dots of kunkuma are put on them, and finally on the last day a male buffalo, called Dēvara-Potu (he who is devoted to the goddess), is brought before the image, and its head cut off by the head Mādiga of the town. The blood is caught in a vessel and sprinkled over some boiled rice, and then the head, with the right foreleg in the mouth, is placed before the shrine on a flat wicker basket, with the rice and blood on another basket just below it. A lighted lamp is placed on the head, and then another Mādiga carries it on his own head round the village, with a new cloth dipped in the blood of the victim tied round his neck. This is regarded here and elsewhere as a very inauspicious and dangerous office, and the headman of the village has to offer considerable inducements to persuade a Mādiga to undertake it. Ropes are tied round his body and arms and held fast by men walking behind him, as he goes round, to prevent his being carried off by evil spirits, and limes are cut in half and thrown into the air, so that the demons may catch at them instead of at the man. It is believed that gigantic demons sit on the tops of tall trees ready to swoop down and carry him away, in order to get the rice and the buffalo's head. The idea of carrying the head and rice round a village, so the people said, is to draw a kind of cordon on every side of it, and prevent the entrance of the evil spirits. Should any one in the town refuse to subscribe for the festival, his house is omitted from the procession, and left to the tender mercies of the devils. This procession is called Bali-Haranam, and in this district inams (lands rent free) are held from Government by certain families of Mādigas for performing it. Besides the buffalo, large numbers of sheep and goats and fowls are sacrificed, each householder giving at least one animal. The head Mādiga who kills the animals, takes the carcase and distributes the flesh among the members of his family. Often cases come into the Courts to decide who has the right to kill them. As the sacrifice cannot wait for the tedious processes of the law, the elders of the village settle the question at once, pending an appeal to the Courts. But in the town of Masulipatam, a Mādiga is specially licensed by the Municipality for the purpose and all disputes are avoided.

At Cocanada there is only one Grāma-Dēvata, Nukalamma (from Nuku, a Telugu word, meaning "broken rice"); but she is very ill-tempered, they told me, and gives much trouble. Curiously enough the present Pujāri

is a woman of the fisherman caste. The office was hereditary in her family, and she is the only surviving member of it. A male relative acts as Deputy PUJĀRI. Offerings are made to NUKALAMMA every day, doubtless on account of her temper. One custom I found observed here, which is not uncommon in these parts. When the victim's head has been cut off, it is put before the shrine and water poured on it. The offerer then waits to see whether the mouth opens. If it does, it is a sign that the sacrifice is accepted. Another ceremony observed here is significant and, doubtless, a relic of the primitive idea of sacrifice. As soon as the victim is killed, the offerer dips his finger in the blood, and puts it on his own forehead.

The annual festival of this goddess lasts for a whole month, ending on the New-Years-Day of the TELUGU calendar. During this festival the procession of pots is observed with special ceremony. Six brass pots, each about two feet high, with the figure of a cobra springing from below the neck and rising over the mouth of the pot, are draped with women's cloths and carried round the town on men's heads. Nothing is put inside them, but, as they go round, the women of each house come out, pour water on the feet of the bearers, and make offerings of rice and fruit. These are solemnly presented to the pots by the bearers, and some powder is applied to the two small feet that project at the base of each pot, and form a sort of frame fitting on the bearer's head. The bearer then takes a little of the turmeric powder, that is already on the foot of the pot, and puts it into the dish in which the offering was brought, with a few margosa leaves from a bundle that he carries with him. The dish is returned to the woman who offered the gifts, which become the property of the PUJĀRI. The women and children of the family mark their foreheads with the turmeric, and put the margosa leaves in their hair. This is called AMMAVARI-PRASADAM. As they go round, the PUJĀRIS dance to the sound of tom-toms. On the last day of the festival, when the buffalo is sacrificed, a curious ceremony takes place which is said to be very common in the villages of this district. After the head is cut off by the Vetti, who is a MĀDIGA, the blood is collected in a basin and nine kinds of grain and gram are put into it. The basin is then put before the idol inside the shrine, and the doors of the shrine are kept shut for three days. On the fourth day the doors are opened, the coagulated mass of blood, grain and gram is carefully washed, and the grain and gram

are separated on the ground behind the shrine, in order to see which of the various kinds of grain have sprouted. All the ryots eagerly assemble to watch the result, and whichever is found to have sprouted, is regarded as marked out by the goddess as the right kind of grain to sow that year. This method of determining which crop to sow is common in both the Godāvari and Masulipatam districts. In these sacrifices to Nukalamma, too, the application of the blood is specially noticeable. Immediately the victim is killed, a small quantity of the blood is smeared on the sides of the doorposts of the shrine, and the Deputy Pujāri dips his finger in the blood and applies it to his forehead, and then all the other people present do the same, and afterwards some boiled rice is mixed with the blood and some tumeric powder, and a little of it is sprinkled on the head of the Mādiga who holds the basin to catch the blood.

When an epidemic of cholera breaks out, another goddess called Maridi-Amman is installed in the place of Nukalamma. A log of margosa wood, about three feet high and six inches in diameter, is cut and roughly carved at the top into the shape of a head, and then fixed in the ground with a pandal of leaves and cloths over it. Then the procession of the earthen pot half filled with buttermilk and rice is conducted, very much in the same way as at Masulipatam, every day till the epidemic subsides. After that some ten or twelve small carts are made, about six feet square, with three pointed stakes standing up on each side, on which live animals are impaled, as in other parts of the Telugu country. The carts are partly filled with boiled rice and curry stuff prepared at the shrine, the blood of the victims sacrificed being poured over the rice. I was told that live animals were only impaled if a cart would not move properly, as they dragged it to the boundary, which is regarded as a sign that the goddess is angry and needs to be appeased.

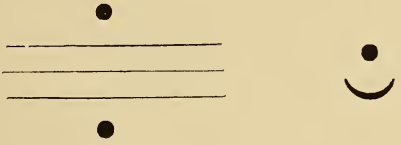
The number of victims slaughtered at some of these festivals is enormous. At Ellore, which is a town of considerable size and importance, I was told that at the annual festival of Mahālakshmi about ten thousand animals are killed in one day, rich people sending as many as twenty or thirty. The blood then flows down into the fields behind the place of sacrifice in a regular flood, and carts full of sand are brought to cover up what remains on the spot. The heads are piled up in a heap about fifteen feet high in front of the shrine, and a large earthen basin about $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet in diameter is then filled with gingelly oil and put on the top of the heap,

a thick cotton wick being placed in the basin and lighted. The animals are all worshipped with the usual "NAMASKARAM" (folded hands raised to the forehead) before they are killed. This slaughter of victims goes on all day, and at midnight about twenty or twenty-five buffaloes are sacrificed, their heads being cut off by a MĀDIGA Pujāri and, together with the carcases, thrown upon the large heaps of rice, which have been presented to the goddess, till the rice is soaked with blood.

The subsequent ceremonies illustrate again the varieties of local custom. The rice is collected in about ten or fifteen large baskets, and, instead of being carried by a MĀDIGA, is carried on a large cart drawn by buffaloes or bullocks, with the MĀDIGA PUJĀRI seated on it. MĀDIGAS sprinkle the rice along the streets and on the walls of the houses, as the cart goes along, shouting "Bali, Bali!" (offering). A large body of men of different castes, Pariahs, Sudras and Kommas, go with the procession: but only the MĀDIGAS and MĀLAS (the two sections of the Pariahs) shout "Bali!", the rest following in silence. They have only two or three torches to show them the way, and no tom-toms nor music. Apparently the idea is that, if they make a noise or display a blaze of lights, they will attract the evil spirits, who will swoop down on them and do them some injury; though in other villages it is supposed that a great deal of noise and flourishing of sticks will keep the evil spirits at bay. Before this procession starts the heads of the buffaloes are put in front of the shrine, with the right forelegs in their mouths and the fat from the entrails smeared about half inch thick over the whole face, and a large earthen lamp on the top of each head. The PAMBALAS (priestly families of the MĀLAS) play tom-toms and chant a long story about GANGAMMA till daybreak, and about 8 A.M. they put the buffalo heads into separate baskets with the lighted lamps upon them, and these are carried in procession through the town to the sound of tom-toms. All castes follow shouting and singing. In former times, I was told, there was a good deal of fighting and disturbance during this procession, but now the police maintain order. When the procession arrives at the Municipal limits, the heads are thrown over the boundary, and left there. The people then all bathe in the canal, and return home. On the last day of the festival, which, I may remark, lasts for about three months, a small cart is made of margosa wood and a stake fixed at each of the four corners, and a pig and a fowl are tied to each stake, while a fruit, called

Dubakaya, is impaled on it instead of the animal. A yellow cloth, sprinkled with the blood of the buffaloes, is tied round the sides of the cart, and some margosa leaves are tied round the cloth. A Pambala sits on the cart, to which are fastened two large ropes, each about 200 yards long. Then men of all castes, without distinction, lay hold of the ropes and drag the cart round the town to the sound of tom-toms and music. Finally it is brought outside the Municipal limits and left there, the Pariahs taking away the animals and fruits.

Sometimes, I was told, animals are sacrificed to Gangamma by the people in Ellore in the courtyards of their own houses. They then clean the wall of the house outside with cow-dung, and make three horizontal lines with kunkuma (a red paste of turmeric and lime), with a dot above and below, and a semi-circle on the right side with a dot in the middle, thus :—



The symbol on the right represents the sun and moon; that on the left is the Saivite Sectarian mark. They then sacrifice to this symbol, sheep, goats or fowls. It is curious that, in these private sacrifices at home, they pour water on the sheep and goats to see whether they shiver, as a sign of acceptance, though this is not done in the public sacrifices at Ellore. At a village called Dharmaja-Gudem, about sixteen miles from Ellore, while the main features of the festivals are the same as those found elsewhere, there are two or three peculiarities, which deserve notice. The ordinary Grāma-Dēvatas of the village are Ellar-amma, Gangamma, Mutyalamma, and Ravel-Amma, who are represented by four stone pillars about six feet high, with the figures of women carved on them, standing in an open field on the outskirts of the village: but, when an epidemic breaks out, Mutyalamma, Gangamma, Ankamma and Mahalakshmi-amma are the deities propitiated, and special images are made of them. Those of the first three are made of clay, but that of Mahalakshmiamma is made of turmeric kneaded into a paste. Then, again, it is noticeable that a Brahman acts as Pujāri of Mahalakshmi, a washerman as Pujāri of Gangamma, and a potter as Pujāri of Ankamma. The Brahman

Pujāri presides over the worship for the greater part of the festival, which lasts for about three months, and during that time the people come almost every day and offer flowers, fruits, cocoanuts, camphor and incense, but no animal sacrifices. All this time too, some Nautch girls come and dance in a booth erected in front of the image and work themselves up into a state of frenzy, during which they are supposed to be inspired by the deities, and utter oracles to the worshippers. When the epidemic begins to abate, the Brahman Pujāri closes his part of the proceedings and departs. Then, on that afternoon and evening, animal sacrifices are offered under the booth. On the first animal killed, which is generally a goat, water is poured from a brass vessel, to see if it shivers. If it does, it is taken as a good omen that the goddess is propitiated, and the disease will disappear. Then other animals are brought and, in accordance with a very common division of functions in the Telugu country, a washerman kills the sheep, goats and fowls, and a Mādiga the buffaloes. The heads of the sheep and goats, as well as of the buffaloes, have the right forelegs put crosswise in the mouths, the face smeared with fat from the entrails, and a lighted lamp placed above them. The blood is caught in a basket full of boiled rice, and the rice and blood are sprinkled round the village, while a Mādiga carries on his own head the head of a buffalo, exactly as is done elsewhere. Here, too, great care is taken to prevent any person from another village taking away any of the rice and blood, lest the other village should get all the benefit of the sacrifice, and evils of all kinds descend on the unhappy villagers who have offered it. The ceremony of impaling live animals on stakes fixed round a wooden car, and dragging them off to the boundary of the village, is also practised here.

At another village called Bhimadole, about twenty miles from Ellore, I came across one of the few instances I have met with of any direct connection between the harvest and the worship of a village goddess. There is an annual festival held there about harvest time, in November or December, lasting one day, which is always Tuesday. About half a ton of rice is boiled in the middle of the village, taken to the shrine and presented in a heap before the image, with a lighted lamp on the top of it, made of rice flour kneaded into a paste, holding about one pint of oil. Some toddy is poured on the ground to the east of the rice by the washerman, incense and camphor are burnt, while the people make Namaskaram (salutation with folded hands raised to the

forehead) to the image. As many as 200 sheep and goats are then killed, and fowls are brought by the poorer people. In this festival the rice soaked in the blood of the victims is not sprinkled on the streets of the village or over the houses, but each ryot gives a handful of it to one of his field servants (a Pariah), who takes and sprinkles it over his master's fields. Three handfuls of the crop are cut on the same day to inaugurate the harvest. No buffaloes are sacrificed during this festival On the other hand, when an epidemic breaks out there is a special festival, when five or six buffaloes are sacrificed as well as about three hundred sheep and goats. The buffaloes are killed last of all. One special buffalo, called PEDDA-VETA (great sacrifice), is reserved to the end, and killed about 10 P.M. Nothing special is done with the blood of the other buffaloes or with that of the sheep and goats, but the blood of the PEDDA-VETA is allowed to flow on to some of the rice, as soon as the head is severed, and both head and carcase are placed upon the rice heap. The head, as usual, has the right foreleg put in the mouth, with fat smeared over the face and a lighted lamp above it. At about 11 P.M. the head is carried by a MĀLA, not by a MĀDIGA in this village, on his own head three times round the boundaries of the village site, and the rice soaked in blood is sprinkled by the MĀLAS on the ground, as they go, and on any cattle they happen to meet, accompanied by the same weird and excited procession as elsewhere.

CANARESE.

THE CANARESE are, Mr. Thurston tells me, closely allied ethnologically to the TELUGUS, and we should naturally expect, therefore, to find a close connection between the ceremonies used by the two peoples in the worship of their village goddesses. A brief account of the ceremonies used in different parts of the CANARESE country will show how far this is actually the case.

In the BELLARY District DURGAMMA, SUKALAMMA and UR-AMMA are very commonly worshipped. UR-AMMA means simply the village goddess, and is equivalent to the general term GRĀMA-DĒVATA. Her festival is not celebrated annually, but when there is a specially good crop, or when cholera or plague break out. The following account of it was given me by an ASĀDI of a village near BELLARY, and may be taken as describing fairly the general type of such festivals and sacrifices throughout the district. We will

suppose that cholera has broken out in a village. The villagers then make vows to offer the sacrifice if the epidemic ceases. The day appointed for the festival is invariably a Tuesday, and on the previous Tuesday an earthen lamp (in the form of a basin), filled with oil and furnished with a stout cotton wick, is placed in the house of the Reddi (village magistrate) and kept lighted till the festival and all the ceremonies are ended. The carpenter, also, prepares beforehand a wooden image of the goddess and a small cart, while a pandal (booth) of leaves and cloths, with a raised platform inside and festoons of flowers hung in front, is made ready in an open space in the village. On the appointed Tuesday a sheep or goat is first sacrificed at the carpenter's house and the carcase given to the Taliaris (village servants, generally Boyas by caste). The image is then put on the cart about sunset, and taken by the villagers in procession to the booth. In some villages the washerman lays clean cloths on the ground, so that the men who carry the image from the cart to the booth may not tread on the earth. Then the people proceed to the house of the flower-seller, who is by caste a Gira and generally a Lingayat, and bring thence a kind of cradle, made of pith and flowers, together with a pot of toddy, a looking-glass, some limes and other articles used in worship. The cradle and looking-glass are hung up in front of the booth, and other things are placed in front of the image. A looking-glass, I was told, is considered very auspicious, and is used by all castes in various religious ceremonies. Next the lighted lamp is brought in procession from the Reddi's house and placed before the image by some man belonging to the Reddi's family. Four measures of boiled rice are then poured in a heap before the image, while flowers, betel leaves, nuts, plantains and cocoanuts are offered, and camphor and incense burnt. When the preliminaries have been duly performed, the buffalo, which has been reserved for sacrifice and dedicated to the goddess since the last festival, is brought from the Pariah quarters to the pandal in solemn procession, the Asādis, some ten or twelve in number, dancing before it and singing songs in honour of the goddess. It has been kept the whole day without food or water, and is garlanded with flowers and smeared with turmeric and red kunkuma. This buffalo is called Ganda-Kona, or husband-buffalo, and, according to the traditional story, represents the Pariah husband who pretended to be a Brahman and married the Brahman girl, now worshipped as Ur-Amma. A fresh

buffalo is always dedicated immediately after the festival, lest the goddess should be left a widow. When it arrives at the pandal, it is laid on its side upon the ground, and its head is cut off by one of the MĀDIGAS with the sacrificial chopper. Its neck is placed over a small pit, which has been dug to receive the blood, and the entrails are taken out and placed in the pit with the blood. The right leg is then cut off below the knee and put crosswise in the mouth, some fat from the entrails is placed on the forehead, and a small earthenware lamp, about as large as a man's two hands, with a wick as thick as his thumb, is placed on the fat and kept there lighted, till the festival is over. Some of the blood and entrails are then mixed with some boiled rice and placed in a new basket, which a MĀDIGA, stripped naked, places on his head and takes round the boundary of the village fields, accompanied by a washerman carrying a torch, and followed by a few of the villagers. He sprinkles the rice, blood, and entrails all round the boundary. The greatest care is taken to see that none of the blood from the pit in front of the pandal, where the buffalo was killed, is taken away by any one from another village, as they believe that in that case all the benefits of the sacrifice would be transferred to the other village. In former days men who stealthily took away the blood were chased and murdered. As this cannot be done under British rule, a strict patrol is kept all round the place where the blood lies, and no one from any other village is allowed to loiter near the spot. Next day, Wednesday, about 4 P.M., villagers, who have made vows, bring sheep for sacrifice and offerings of boiled rice, fruits, cocoanuts, etc., with incense and camphor. I was told that fowls were not offered to UR-AMMA. After the sheep has been killed, the head is cut off and water is poured on the nose: if the mouth opens, it is regarded as a good omen. The carcases are taken away by the offerers to their own homes as a feast for the family. The heads are all put together and distributed to those of the village artizans and officials who are meat-eaters.

On Thursday about 4 P.M. the flesh of the buffalo, which was sacrificed on Tuesday evening and must be by this time rather high, is cooked in front of the pandal, and part of it is first offered to the goddess, with some boiled rice, on five separate leaves. The ASĀDIS make the offering with songs and dances, the breaking of cocoanuts and burning of incense and camphor, and prostrations flat on the ground (SHASHTANGAM). For this part of their service they receive

twenty pies (about 1¾*d.*), 4 pies for each leaf, not an extravagant sum. Then they take the five leaves away and eat the flesh and rice at some distance from the pandal, where it was cooked. These offerings to the goddess must be eaten on the spot, and are not allowed to be taken home. The rest of the flesh is given to the Pariahs and taliaris, who cook and eat some of it on the spot and take away the remainder. After sunset the goddess is put on the wooden cart and dragged in procession to the boundary of the village, an Asādi walking in front and carrying on his head the head of the buffalo. When they come to the limit of the village lands, they leave the image on their own side of the boundary and there it stays. This ceremony ends the festival.

Somewhat similar festivals are held periodically to propitiate Sunkalamma, the goddess of small-pox and measles, and Maremma, the goddess of cholera. In the town of Bellary there is a shrine of Durgamma, which consists only of an ant-hill, with a small stone shrine about thirty feet long, six deep, and eight or ten high built over it. The story goes that an old woman many years ago was worshipping an image of Durgamma on this spot, when the goddess appeared to her and said that she was Durgamma of Bellary, that she lived in the ant-hill and ought to be worshipped there. The ant-hill grew in size in the course of years, and a shrine was built. The present Pujāri, who is a Golla or milkman by caste, says that in the time of his father, about forty years ago, a large snake lived in the ruined wall behind the shrine, and used to come out and eat eggs and milk placed for it before the shrine. Apparently it very rarely makes its appearance now. There is an annual festival to this goddess in Bellary, when he-buffaloes, sheep, goats, and fowls are offered in sacrifice. When a buffalo is sacrificed, the right leg is, as usual, cut off and placed in its mouth, and fat is smeared over its forehead, with a lighted lamp on the top. Then the offerer stands with folded hands in front of the goddess asking for a boon and, if at that time the mouth of the buffalo opens, he thinks that his prayer has been granted; otherwise he goes away disappointed. The Tahsildar of Bellary conjectured that the practice of putting the right foreleg in the mouth was originally connected with this last ceremony, its object being to prevent *rigor mortis* setting in at once, and to keep the mouth open and the jaws twitching, so as to deceive the superstitious. But this does not seem to be a likely explanation of so widespread a custom. The skins of the buffaloes offered in sacrifice are used for the

drums employed in worship, and the carcases are given to the Pariahs and taliaris in the vicinity of the shrine. People who do not approve of the slaughter of animals cut off the right ear of a goat or sheep and, after carrying it round the temple, offer it to the pujāri. The blood of animals offered in sacrifice in Bellary is not sprinkled round either the shrine or the town. People who offer animal sacrifices also offer boiled rice with them. The rice is heaped on leaves in front of the shrine, turmeric and kunkuma are sprinkled over it, and then it is distributed to the people present. Tuesdays and Fridays are regarded as specially suitable days for the worship of this deity, and are observed as days of fasting by the Pujāris of the shrine. About February every year the hook swinging festival is celebrated in connection with the worship of Durgamma; originally devotees swung from the top of a high pole by hooks fastened through the muscles of their backs; but in these days only an effigy is swung from the pole. It is quite common, however, for devotees to come to the shrine with silver pins fastened through their cheeks. These pins are about six inches long, and rectangular in shape. They are thrust through both cheeks, and then fastened, just like a safety pin. The devotee comes to the temple with his cheeks pierced in this fashion, and with a lighted lamp in a brass dish on his head. On his arrival before the shrine, the lamp is placed on the ground, and the pin removed and offered to the goddess. I was told that the object of this ceremony is to enable the devotee to come to the shrine with a concentrated mind!

It was also formerly the custom for women to come to the shrine clad only in twigs of the margosa tree, prostrate themselves before the goddess, and then resume their normal clothing. But this is now only done by children, the grown-up women putting the margosa branches over a cloth wrapped round their loins.

The ceremonies performed in the Mysore State, further south, do not materially differ from those already described, though they seem in some places to have been greatly influenced by sun-worship.

In Bangalore there is a shrine of Mahesvaramma, at a village near the Maharajah's palace, where a Brahman widow is the Pujāri. The popularity of the shrine seems to have declined in recent years, but daily offerings of fruit and flowers, camphor and incense are still made, and on Tuesdays

and Fridays people sometimes bring fowls and sheep to offer them to the goddess. When there has been illness in a house, or when, for some other reason, special vows have been made, women often come to the shrine with a silver safety pin pierced through their cheeks, as is the custom for men at Bellary. They offer fruit and flowers, prostrate themselves on the ground before the image, then take out the pin and present it to the goddess. In front of the shrine, in an open space across the road, about fifteen yards off, stands a block of granite like a thick milestone, rounded at the top, with a small hollow above it, and a female figure without arms, representing Doddamma, the sister and companion of Mahesvaramma, roughly carved on the side fronting the shrine. The stone is about two and-a-half feet high and stands on a low stone platform. When the people make offerings to Mahesvaramma, the Pujāri pours the curds they bring into the hollow on the top of the stone, and smears the image with turmeric and kunkuma, puts a garland round the stone and breaks a cocoanut before it. Dodamma seems to be treated as a younger sister of the goddess, whom it is politic to propitiate, though with inferior honours.

An annual festival is held in this village after harvest. A special clay image is made by the goldsmith from the mud of the village tank, and a canopy is erected in a spot, where four lanes meet, and decorated with tinsel and flowers. The goldsmith takes the image from his house, and deposits it beneath the canopy. The festival lasts three days. On the first day the proceedings begin at about 2 p.m., the washerman acting as Pujāri. He is given about two seers of rice, which he boils, and at about 5 p.m. brings and spreads before the image. Then he pours curds and turmeric over the image, probably to avert the evil eye, and prostrates himself. The villagers next bring rice, fruits, flowers, incense and camphor, and small lamps made of paste of rice flour, with oil and lighted wick inside, called Ārati and very commonly used in the Canarese country. One ārati is waved by the head of each household before the clay image, another before the shrine of Mahesvaramma, and another before a shrine of Munesvara about two furlongs off, and a fourth at home to his own household deity. During these ceremonies music is played, and tom-toms sounded without ceasing. After this ceremony any Sudras, who have made vows, kill sheep and fowls in their own homes and then feast on them, while the women pierce their cheeks with silver pins, and go to worship at the shrine

of MAHESVARAMMA. At about 9 P.M. the MĀDIGAS, who are esteemed the left hand section of the PARIAHS, come and sacrifice a he-buffalo (Dēvara-Kona), which has been bought by subscription and left to roam free about the village under the charge of the TOTI, or village watchman. On the day of the sacrifice it is brought before the image, and the TOTI cuts off its head with the sacrificial chopper. The right foreleg is also cut off and put crosswise in the mouth, and the head is then put before the image with an earthen lamp alight on the top of it. The blood is cleaned up by the sweepers at once, to allow the other villagers to approach the spot; but the head remains there facing the image till the festival is over. The MĀDIGAS take away the carcase, and hold a feast in their quarter of the village.

On the second day there are no public offerings, but each household makes a feast and feeds as many people as it can. On the third day there is, first, a procession of the image of MAHESVARAMMA, seated on her wooden horse, and that of MUNESVARA from the neighbouring shrine, round the village. They stop at each house, and the people offer fruits and flowers, but no animals.

At about 5 P.M. the washerman takes up the clay image of the GRĀMA-DĒVATA, goes with it in procession to the tank, accompanied by all the people, to the sound of pipes and tom-toms, walks into the tank about knee-deep, and there deposits the image and leaves it.

This is the common type of festival held in honour of the GRĀMA-DĒVATA in all the villages round about BANGALORE, whatever special deity may be worshipped, allowing, of course, for the variations of detail which are found everywhere. In one small village with a big name, viz., KEMPAPURA AGRAHARA, where PUJAMMA is worshipped, the PUJĀRI of the shrine has nothing to do with the buffalo sacrifice during the annual festival. That ceremony is performed by the MĀDIGAS alone. The blood of this victim is mixed with some boiled rice in a large earthen pot, and taken at night round the village by the TOTI, and sprinkled on the ground. The MĀDIGAS go with him, carrying torches and beating tom-toms. The object of this ceremony is, as usual, to keep off evil spirits.

PUJAMMA is especially the goddess of the MĀDIGAS in these parts, and the buffalo sacrifice forms an important part of the annual festival whenever she is worshipped. At a

group of villages some ten miles from Bangalore, near YELAHANKA, I found that she was represented by no image, but by a small earthen lamp, which is always kept lighted. At one shrine on the outskirts of BANGALORE, where there are seven goddesses, viz., ANNAMMA, the presiding goddess, CHANDESHVERAMMA, MAYESVERAMMA, MARAMMA (the goddess of cholera), UDALAMMA (goddess of swollen necks), KOKKALAMMA (goddess of coughs) and SUKHAJAJAMMA (goddess of small-pox and measles), the fire-walking ceremony forms an important part of the annual festival which lasts for ten days. A trench is dug in front of the shrine about thirty feet long, five feet wide and one and-a-half feet deep, and washed with a solution of cow-dung, to purify it. About thirty seers of boiled rice are then brought on the fifth day of the festival, and offered to the goddess before the trench. It is all put into the trench, and some ten seers of curds are poured over it and then distributed to the people, who eat some on the spot and some at home. A cart-load of firewood is then spread over the trench, set alight and left to burn for about three hours, till the wood becomes a mass of red-hot embers. When all is ready, the people assemble, and the PUJĀRI, whose turn it is to conduct the worship, first bathes to purify himself and then, amid the deafening din of trumpets, tom-toms, and cymbals and the clapping of hands, walks with bare feet slowly and deliberately over the glowing embers, the whole length of the trench towards the shrine of the seven goddesses. After him about thirty or forty women walk over the red-hot embers with lighted ĀRATIS on their heads. Such is the power of the goddess, the people told me, that no one is injured. The PUJĀRI of the shrine declared positively that the people put no oil nor anything else on their feet when they walk over.

At MYSORE CITY, where the fire-walking ceremony is also performed, I asked three men who had walked over the trench, why they were not hurt. Their reply was, that people who were without sin were never hurt! I can only say that in this case their faces sadly belied their characters.

The following account of the worship of village deities in the CITY of MYSORE, and the note on the worship of village deities in the CANARESE country generally, was kindly given to me by Mr. Ram Krishna Row, the Palace Officer at Mysore:—

"The MARIS of MYSORE are said to be seven in number, and all the seven are sisters—

(1) Bisal Mari.
(2) Goonal Mari.
(3) Kel Mari.
(4) Yeeranagere Mari.
(5) Hiridevathy.
(6) Chammandamma.
(7) Uttahnahaliyamma.

"Of the seven Maris, Hikidevathy is said to be the eldest. Every year the Mari Jatra is held, generally in the month of February. It lasts for about four weeks, and consists of the following :—

(1) Mari Saru,
(2) Mari Made,
(3) Mari Sidi,
(4) Kelammana Habba,

each taking nearly a week's time.

"(1) *Mari Saru.*—On Sunday of the first week of the Mari Jatra at about 6 p.m. the people and pujāris, called Toreyars, collect at a consecrated place in the fort (the place now used is a little to the east of the southern entrance to the palace), cook rice there, and colour the cooked rice red with the blood of a sheep or goat, killed on the spot. After offering the rice to the Bisal Mari they take it, with the carcase of the goat, to the south fort gate and westwards, going round the fort in the inner circle, dragging the carcase of the goat on the ground, and all the way sprinkling the red rice over the streets (this is said to purify the place lying inside the circle traced in their course), till they arrive at the point whence they started. They then convey the carcase and the remaining rice to a spot near the shrine of Madesvara, situated in the quarters where they live. Then the entrails of the goat are roasted and, with the rice, divided into three equal parts, and made into three balls, which are given away to the Chaklas (right-hand class) for their services in tom-toming during the rice-sprinkling ceremony.

"(2) *Mari Made.*—On Monday of the second week the Toreyars throw away all their old earthen pots, used for cooking, and get their houses whitewashed. They get new pots, prepare Kitchadi in them, cover them with earthen lids and put āratis (lights) on them. At about 6 p.m. the āratis are carried by females to a consecrated pial, known as the Galdige, and placed in front of a Kanna

KANNADI (a looking glass used as a symbol of the goddess). Two sheep or goats are killed in sacrifice on the spot, and all the flesh is distributed amongst the families of TOREYARS. This done, the KITCHADI pots are carried by females in procession to the BISAL MARI shrine, cloths about four feet wide being spread all along the way on which the procession walks, that they may not tread on the earth. The KITCHADI in all the pots is offered to the BISAL MARI, and heaped up on a cloth in front of the BISAL MARI image. The females return home with the empty pots, which will henceforth be used for cooking in their families. The heap of KITCHADI then becomes the property of the washerman pujāri, who distributes it amongst his friends and relatives. At the end of this week the MANE MANCHI shrine, which remains closed all the year, is opened. It contains a hole resembling an ant-hill, which is said to be the abode of an unknown serpent, to which the name of MANE MANCHAMMA is given. Prayers are offered here, chiefly by the men that are to swing on the SIDI, but also by the man that performs the "HUMAN SACRIFICE CEREMONY", which is now a semblance, not a reality. The TOREYAR caste men generally bring from their houses bunches of plantains, and store them in this shrine. They are left to remain there till the SIDI is over, after which they become the property of the families by whom they were brought to the shrine.

"(3) *Mari Sidi.*—This occupies the third week of the JATRA. On the Sunday, before the Monday on which the SIDI takes place, the Human Sacrifice Ceremony called BALI is performed. It begins at midnight, and lasts till dawn. The man appointed for the BALI is made to lie down, a piece of cloth fully covering his body. This takes place on the same spot where the rice for the MARI SARU (already explained) was prepared. A VAJARANAM (carpenter) begins the ceremony by touching the man lying down with a cluster of flowers of the cocoanut tree. The CHAKLAS keep tom-toming, while the carpenter dances round the victim, singing songs. Fires are lit all round. The carpenter closes his dance by touching the victim again with his cluster of flowers about daybreak. The people present carry the victim (Bali Man) to the MANE MANCHI Shrine, where he takes rest and walks straight home. On Monday the carpenter who performed the Bali ceremony the previous day, gets the SIDI CAR fitted up. It is ready about 5 P.M. for the swing. The men to swing on the SIDI are kept without food. They take a cold bath, dress themselves on the pial or gaddige

(mentioned in connection with MADE) and then go to the palace, where they get a present of some betel leaves and nuts, and thence they proceed to the shrine of MANE MANCHI, offer prayers there and join the party in BISAL MARAMMANAGUDI, where the SIDI is ready with the victims, viz.,—two buffaloes, one on behalf of each man that swings on the SIDI, and a sheep or a goat. The buffaloes are smeared with turmeric (yellow powder) and kunkuma (red powder), and are also garlanded with flowers and margosa leaves. They remain with the SIDI, but, before the men are allowed by the carpenter to swing on the SIDI, the carpenter tests his fittings, and offers the goat in sacrifice. Its blood is taken and sprinkled over all the joints of the car and the wheels of the SIDI. The goat sacrificed is given away to the coolies that work at the car. Then the SIDI procession begins. The two men who are to swing go with the buffaloes to the HIRIDEVATHI shrine, where another SIDI party from YEERANGERE, the northern part of the city, meet them with another SIDI, one buffalo and one man to swing. One at a time mounts on each SIDI. After mounting, each lightly strikes the other as the SIDIS cross. Then each swings suspended by a band round his waist on his SIDI. It is at this time that the buffaloes are all killed one after another. It is attempted to cut off the head of each victim with one blow, but actually more blows are used before the buffaloes' heads are severed. When this is over, the men on the SIDIS get down and return to the HIRIDEVATHI shrine. There they offer pūja, after which the parties return home. The party from the BISAL MARI shrine go to the MANE MANCHI shrine, take rest, dine and spend the night there, offering prayers, etc. The following morning they walk home.

"(4) *Kelammana Habba.*—The same night the buffaloes' carcases are removed by CHAKLAS and carried to the open place outside the fort, adjoining the southern wall, forming the Barr Parade Maidan, which place is presumed to be that of KELMARAMMA. There they put up for the occasion a green shed, and place the two buffaloes' heads under them. On these heads are placed lights, and the faces are smeared with fat, turmeric and kunkuma. The right foreleg of each animal is cut off, and stuck into the mouth. The flesh, etc., of the buffaloes is cooked and eaten by the CHAKLAS as well as by their friends and relatives. For one week the heads are kept in the above sheds and worshipped every day. On the next Monday the CHAKLAS and HOLEYARS, called also the BALAGAI caste, carry the heads of the two buffaloes in grand

procession to their quarters and eat them up, *if they are not very putrid.*

"A legend is prevalent regarding this KELMARAMMA. HIRIDEVATHI, the eldest of the MARI sisters, is said to have ordered one of her younger sisters KELMARI to bring fire. The latter went, and in her search for fire, she found a lot of low caste men cooking the flesh of a buffalo and eating the same. It was a curious sight for her to see them do so. She sat there observing what was going on, and lost time. As she was late, the eldest sister was very wrath and excommunicated her with a curse, saying that she should only be worshipped by the lowest class of people. Hence the heads of the buffaloes are worshipped in the name of KILMARI. The following legend is believed in as regards MARI in general. Once upon a time there lived a RISHI who had a fair looking daughter. A CHANDALA, *i.e.*, a person of the lowest caste, desired to marry her. He went to KĀSI (BENARES) in the disguise of a BRAHMAN, where, under the tuition of a learned Brahman, he became well versed in the SHASTRAS, and learnt the Brahman modes of life. On his return he passed off for a Brahman, and gradually made offers to the RISHI lady, and somehow succeeded in prevailing upon her to marry him. She did so, her father also consenting to the match. They lived a married life for some time, and had children. One day it so happened that one of the children noticed the father stitch an old shoe previous to going out for a bath. This seemed curious, and the child drew the mother's attention to it. Then the mother, by virtue of her *Topas*, came to know the base trick that had been played upon her by her husband, and cursed him and herself. The curse on herself was that she should be born a MARI, to be worshipped only by low caste men. The curse on him was that he should be born a buffalo, fit to be sacrificed to her, and that her children should be born as sheep and chickens. So that, during periodical MARI festivals the buffaloes, the sheep and chickens are used as victims, and the right leg of the he-buffalo is cut off and stuck in his mouth, in memory of his having stitched the shoes in his disguise as a BRAHMAN.

SACRIFICES PERFORMED BY THE CANARESE OF THE MYSORE COUNTRY.

"Animal sacrifices are generally offered by VAISYAS and SUDRAS, the victims being usually buffaloes, sheep or goats and fowls. These sacrifices are usually propitiatory and

sometimes thank-offerings, but there is no sin-offering. When, owing to sickness, anyone's life is despaired of, a vow to sacrifice the life of an animal on the recovery of the sick person is made and carried out by the convalescent as soon as possible after restoration to health. Should any misfortune happen to a personal enemy, an animal is at once sacrificed as a "thank" offering!

"In all these cases, the victim is taken before the altar, and there decapitated by a stroke of a sword, the blood being sprinkled on the object before which the sacrifice is offered, or on the ground in the vicinity. In no case is the blood ever sprinkled on the persons offering, the sacrifice. Before a building is finished or occupied, the same kind of sacrifice is made, to propitiate the spirit supposed to have already entered there, and the blood of the victim is sprinkled over the materials of which the building is constructed.

"Similarly, when a well is sunk, or a tank built, or a new tool or agricultural implement used, all of which from their nature might be the means of causing death, a sacrifice is offered to the evil spirit to prevent accidents, and, in the case of sharp edged tools, blood is poured on that part which would cause the hurt. A 'partial' sacrifice is made in the case of tools and implements, which from their nature would not be likely to cause death, and in these cases only a slight cut is made, usually in the nose or ear of the animal, sufficient to draw a few drops of blood, which are smeared on the tool, as already mentioned. In cases of epidemics, blood is poured over the image of the deity, supposed to be responsible for the disease."

The relic of human sacrifice described above, in Mr. Ramkrishna Row's memorandum, would serve to show that in Mysore such sacrifices at one time formed a regular part of the worship of the village deities, and this is confirmed by the account given in the "Mysore and Coorg Manual" by Mr. Lewis Rice (Vol. iii, pp. 264–265) of the worship of Grāma-Dēvata in Coorg, a hill country to the west of the Mysore State, inhabited by a mixed population, containing a few aboriginal tribes, about a hundred and twenty thousand cultivators and artizans, who were formerly serfs but are now freemen, and a ruling class of Kodagas or Coorgs, who probably migrated into the country about the third century A.D.

"The essential features of the religion of the Coorgs" says Mr. Rice, "are anti-Brahmanical, and consist of ancestral and

demon worship." With reference to the worship of GRĀMA-DĒVATAS among them he says, "as among other DRAVIDIAN mountain tribes, so also in COORG, tradition relates that human sacrifices were offered in former times to secure the favour of their GRĀMA-DĒVATAS, MARIAMMA, DURGA, and BHADRA KALI, the tutelary goddesses of the SAKTI line, who are supposed to protect the villages or NĀDS from all evil influences. In KIRINDADU and KONIUCHERI-GRĀMA in KATIYET NĀD, once every three years, in December and June, a human sacrifice used to be brought to BHADRA KALI, and during the offering by the PANIKAS (a class of religious mendicants) the people exclaimed "AL AMMA!" A man, Oh Mother!, but once a devotee shouted "AL ALL AMMA, *Adu*!"—not a man, oh mother, a goat—and since that time a he-goat without blemish has been sacrificed. Similarly in BELLUR in TAVALIGERI-MURNAD of KIGGAINAD TALUQ, once a year, by turns from each house, a man was sacrificed by cutting off his head at the temple; but when the turn came to a certain home, the devoted victim made his escape into the jungle. The villagers, after an unsuccessful search, returned to the temple, and said to the pujāri "KALAK ADU" which has a double meaning, viz., KALAKE next year, ADU we will give, or ADU a goat, and thenceforth only scapegoats were offered. The devotees fast during the day. The he-goat is killed in the afternoon, the blood sprinkled upon a stone, and the flesh eaten. At night the PANIKAS, dressed in red and white striped cotton cloths, and their faces covered with metal or bark masks, perform their demoniacal dances. In MERCARA TALUQ in IPPANIVOLAVADE and in KADIKERI in HALERINAD, the villagers sacrifice a KONA or male buffalo instead of a man. Tied to a tree in a gloomy grove near the temple, the beast is killed by a MĒDA (a wandering tribe, who are basket and mat makers), who cuts off its head with a large knife, but no COORGS are present at the time. The blood is spilled on a stone under a tree, and the flesh eaten by the MĒDAS. In connection with this sacrifice there are peculiar dances performed by the COORGS around the temple, the KOMB ATA or horn dance, each man wearing the horns of a spotted deer or stag on his head; the PILI-ATA or peacock's feather dance, the performers being ornamented with peacock's feathers, and the CHAURI-ATA or yak-tail dance, during which the dancers, keeping time, swing yak-tails. These ornaments belong to the temple, where they are kept.

"In some cases where a particular curse, which can only be removed by an extraordinary sacrifice, is said by the

KANIYA (The KANIYAS are religious mendicants, said to be descendants of a MALAYALAM BRAHMAN and a low caste woman) to rest upon a house, stable or field, the ceremony performed seems to be another relic of human sacrifices. The KANIYA sends for some of his fraternity, the PANIKAS or BANNUS, and they set to work. A pit is dug in the middle room of the house, or in the yard, or the stable, or the field, as the occasion may require. Into this one of the magicians descends. He sits down in Hindu fashion, muttering mantras Pieces of wood are laid across the pit, and covered with the earth a foot or two deep. Upon this platform a fire of jack wood is kindled, into which butter, sugar, different kinds of grain, etc., are thrown. This sacrifice continues all night, the PANIKA sacrificer above, and his immured colleague below, repeating their incantations all the while. In the morning the pit is opened, and the man returns to the light of day. These sacrifices are called MARANADA BALI or death atonements. They cost from ten to fifteen rupees. Instead of a human being, a cock is sometimes shut up in the pit, and killed afterwards.

"In cases of sore affliction befalling a whole GRĀMA or NĀD, such as small-pox, cholera, or cattle disease, the ryots combine to appease the wrath of MARI-AMMA by collecting contributions of pigs, fowls, rice, cocoanuts, bread, and plantains from the different houses, and depositing them at the MANDU: whence they are carried in procession with tom-toms. In one basket there is some rice, and the members of each house on coming out bring a little rice in the hand, and waving it round the head, throw it into the basket, with the belief that the dreaded evil will depart with the rice. At last the offerings are put down on the Nād boundary, the animals are killed, their blood is offered on a stone, the rice and basket are left, and the rest of the provisions are consumed by the persons composing the procession. The people of adjoining GRĀMAS or NĀDS repeat the same ceremony, and thus the epidemic is supposed to be banished from the country. In still greater calamities, a flock of sheep is driven from Nād to Nād, and at last expelled from the country."

TAMIL.

The ceremonies observed in the worship of village deities in the TAMIL DISTRICTS of TANJORE, TRICHINOPOLY, and CUDDALORE closely resemble those prevailing in the TELUGU and CANARESE countries; but there are striking differences,

which seem largely due to the influence of BRAHMANICAL forms of worship. In the first place the ceremonial washing of the images and the processions during the festivals are much more elaborate in these districts than among the TELUGUS and CANARESE. Then, again, the male deities connected with the goddesses are much more prominent, and tend much more to assume an independent position. IYENAR is entirely independent and has a separate shrine, and often a separate festival, while in many cases special sacrifices are made to the male attendants, MADURAI-VĪRAN and MŪNADIAN. And, then, in the third place, there is a widespread idea that animal sacrifices are distasteful to good and respectable deities, both male and female, so that no animal sacrifices are ever offered to IYENAR or to the good and kind goddesses. The ancient sacrifices of fowls, sheep, goats, and buffaloes are, indeed, still offered, but only to the male attendants, MADURAI-VĪRAN and MŪNADIAN, and not to the goddesses themselves, and while the animals are being killed, a curtain is often drawn in front of the image of the goddess, or else the door of her shrine is shut, lest she should be shocked at the sight of the shedding of blood.

An account of the modes of worship and festivals in some typical villages will clearly show both the resemblances to the TELUGU and CANARESE uses, and also the striking differences.

In the district of CUDDALORE, at a village called VANDIPALIAM, three deities are worshipped, MARIAMMAN, DRAUPATI, and IYENAR, each of whom has a separate shrine. MARIAMMAL's is the largest, about 12 feet high, 25 feet long, and 12 or 15 feet broad. DRAUPATI's is less imposing, being only about 6 feet high, 10 feet long and 8 feet broad, while IYENAR stands in the open, under a tree, with clay images of horses, elephants, dogs, and warriors (or Vīrans) on either side. The VĪRANS are supposed to keep watch over their master, while the animals serve as his VAHANAMS (*i.e.*, vehicles), on which he rides in his nightly chase after evil spirits. Individual villagers, both men and women, constantly offer private sacrifices consisting of boiled rice, fruit, sugar, incense, and camphor, or fowls and sheep to the VĪRAN of IYENAR, but not to IYENAR himself. Whenever an animal sacrifice is offered, a curtain is first drawn before the image of IYENAR, and then the victim is brought before the image of the VĪRAN. Water is sprinkled over it, a wreath of flowers is put round its neck by the pujari, and turmeric and kunkuma are smeared on its forehead. Then a bottle of arrack, a pot of

toddy, two or three cheroots, some ganja (Indian hemp) and opium, and dried fish are presented to the VĪRAN, afterwards to be consumed by the pujāri. Camphor is burnt between the animal and the VIRAN, and finally the head of the victim is cut off by a pujāri, specially appointed for the purpose, with a large chopper. Nothing special is done with the blood. The carcase is taken away by the offerer, and the head belongs to the pujāri, who cuts it off.

Once a year a public sacrifice is offered to IYENAR by the whole village, some time in April or May. On this occasion the image of IYENAR, which is made of granite and stands about $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet high, is first washed with gingelly oil, lime juice, milk and curds, with cocoanut, plantains, sugar and some aromatic spices all mixed together. Then cocoanut milk, sandalwood paste and clean water are poured over it. After these ablutions the image is wiped with a cloth and ornamented with flowers, some sandalwood paste is put on the forehead, and a cloth tied round its waist. The villagers then bring boiled rice, cocoanuts, plantains, betel leaves and betel nut, sweet cakes of rice flour, sugar and cocoanut in large quantities, and spread them all on leaves upon the ground before the image. The pujāri burns incense and camphor, and finally the offerings are all distributed among the people present. After these offerings have been duly made, a curtain is drawn in front of the image of IYENAR, and sheep and fowls are sacrificed to the VĪRAN, in the same way as at private sacrifices.

MARIAMMAN and DRAUPATI have each one annual festival, which lasts for ten days, but no animal sacrifices are ever offered on these festivals, or on any other occasions at the shrines of these goddesses. The festival begins with the hoisting of a flag, and then for eight days there are processions morning and evening, when a metal image of the goddess is carried in a palanquin through all the streets of the village. On the ninth day there is a car procession, when the image is put on a large car, about 20 feet high, and dragged round the village, while on the night of the tenth day the image is put on a raft, and dragged round the tank with torches, pipes and tom-toms. Offerings of boiled rice, fruits and flowers, incense and camphor, are made every day and especially on the ninth day, when a large crowd usually assembles.

At a large village in the TANJORE District, named SHIYALI, where Brahmanism is very strong, IYENAR, PIDĀRI,

Mariamman, Angalamman, and Kaliamman, are all worshipped with typical rites; but in this village, though no animal sacrifices are offered to Kaliamman, Mariamman, Pidāri and Angalamman, yet they are offered to the subordinate male deities, Madurai-Vīran and Mūnadian, who act as guardians of their shrines. Apparently, however, Pidāri is regarded as slightly less squeamish in the matter of blood-shed than the others, as curtains are drawn before the other three when animals are sacrificed to Madurai-Vīran and Mūnadian, but not before Pidāri. No festival is held for Kaliamman, who seems to be a rather inert deity, of no great account in practical affairs. During the festivals of Mariamman, Pidāri and Angalamman the ablutions are particularly elaborate. The image is washed twice every day, morning and evening, with water, oil, milk, cocoanut milk, a solution of turmeric, rosewater, a solution of sandal-wood, honey, sugar, limes, and a solution of the bark of certain trees, separately in a regular order. This ceremonial washing is called in the Tamil country Abishegam, and certainly deserves an imposing name. The Pujāri next repeats certain mantrams (sacred texts) before the image, after the example of Brahman priests, and the offerings of the people, boiled rice, fruit, flowers, cakes, sugar, etc., are presented, incense and camphor are burnt, and prostrations made to the deity. Every evening, after sunset, an image of the goddess made of metal, on a small wooden platform decorated with tinsel and flowers, is carried in procession on the shoulders of the people, round the main streets of the village, accompanied with fireworks and torches, and the inspiriting sounds of the tom-tom. After the procession, camphor is burnt, a cocoanut broken and the image replaced in the shrine.

On the tenth day of the festival, in the evening, animal sacrifices are offered, consisting of fowls and sheep, to Madurai-Vīran and Mūnadian. People who have made vows, in times of sickness or distress, or in order to secure some boon, bring their victims to the shrine. Water and turmeric are poured on the whole body of the animal, and some mantrams are recited by the pujāri. If the animal is a sheep or goat, it is then seized by the offerer and his friends, some of whom catch hold of its hind legs, while others hold fast to a rope fastened round its neck, and its head is cut off with one stroke of the chopper by one of the pujāris. The head is placed in front of the image of Madurai-Vīran with its right foreleg in its mouth. During the killing of the

victim a curtain is drawn in front of MARIAMMAN and ANGALAMMAN, but not before PIDĀRI. At the festival of MARIAMMAN two special ceremonies are performed, which are not performed at the other festivals in this village, but are quite common elsewhere. When sheep are sacrificed, the blood is collected in earthen vessels, mixed with boiled rice, and then sprinkled in the enclosure of the shrine and in the four corners of the main streets, through which the procession passes. What remains over is taken and thrown away in some field at a little distance from the village. Then, after the animals have been sacrificed, the fire-walking ceremony takes place. A trench is dug inside the enclosure of the shrine and filled with logs of wood, which are set alight and reduced to glowing embers. In the evening the metal image of MARIAMMAN is brought out and held in front of the fire, while a short puja is performed by burning camphor. Then the Pujāri walks barefooted over the red hot embers, followed by other people, who have made vows to perform this act of devotion. During the festival of PIDĀRI, there is a car procession on the ninth day, which is always the day of the new moon, and in the evening one or more buffaloes are sacrificed to MADURAI-VĪRAN or MŪNADIAN. The victim is always a he-buffalo, and is generally brought by some private person. Water and turmeric are first poured over it, and it is garlanded with flowers, and then its head is cut off with a single stroke of the chopper by a man of the PADAYACHI caste, who, by the way, is not a PARIAH. The head is placed in front of the image, but the foreleg is not cut off or put in the mouth, as is constantly done in the case of buffalo sacrifices in the TELUGU country. The blood is collected in an earthen vessel, and placed near the image of PIDĀRI and left there the whole night. Next morning, the people assured me, only a small quantity of blood is found in the vessel, PIDĀRI having drunk the greater part of it. The remains are poured away outside the compound of the shrine. The head and carcase of the buffaloes sacrificed are all handed over to the Pariahs of the village, who take them away for a feast.

At the festival of ANGALAMMAN pigs are sacrificed as well as sheep, goats and fowls, not only by the PARIAHS, but also by any caste of SUDRAS. The IYENAR festival takes place at the same time as the PIDĀRI festival, and the same ceremonies are performed, except that no animals are sacrificed at his shrine.

The idea, so naively expressed in the PIDĀRI festival at SHIYALI, that the goddess actually drinks the blood of the victims, is not uncommon. In many villages some of the blood is collected in an earthen vessel, and placed inside the shrine after the sacrifice At one village, where pigs are sacrificed to MADURAI-VĪRAN, though the blood is not collected in any vessel, but simply allowed to flow on the ground, the people assured me that MADURAI-VĪRAN drinks it. In the same way the rice and blood sprinkled through the streets of a village or round the boundaries, which is called BALI, (offering), in TELUGU, is regarded as food for the evil spirits. In many TAMIL villages the rice and blood are made up into little balls and thrown up in the air, where, as the people firmly believe, they are seized upon by the deity to whom the sacrifice is offered, or by the evil spirits that hover round the procession.

Another characteristic festival, which is specially conducted and paid for by the PARIAHS, is held in the TRICHINOPOLY district, near the village of Essene, during the month of July or August. About a mile south of the village, on the road to MADRAS, there is a shrine, consisting of a large open enclosure about thirty feet square, surrounded by a low stone wall. On the west side of the enclosure are three large images of men seated on tigers, each about eight feet high, representing PANDUR-KARUPPANNA (PANDUR being the name of an ancient village), PUDU-KARUPPANNA (*i.e.*, the NEW KARUPPANNA) and URSUTHIYAN (he who goes round the village); and in front of them a number of small stones, black with oil, six carved roughly into the figures of men and women, and about six quite plain, some of them only about six inches high. At right angles to this row of stones, on the south side, runs a small shrine, with seven small female figures representing seven virgins (KANIMARS), while at the north-east corner is a small separate enclosure with a figure of MADURAI-VĪRAN on horseback with his two wives seated in front of him. The presiding deities of the shrine are the goddesses, represented by the small stones, and not the imposing but ugly male creatures seated on tigers. When the time for the festival has been fixed, each family of Pariahs gives about one rupee for the expenses. Then, on the first day, they perform pūja (worship) in the Pariah street of the village of Melakari close by the shrine. Three sets of seven brass pots, standing one above the other, are placed in one of the huts, and on the top of each set a small image made of the five metals, one image representing PUDU-KARUPPANNA,

another PANDUR-KARUPPANNA and the third a female deity, MALAIYAYI, who is the wife of KARUPPANNA. Boiled rice is first offered, cocoanuts are broken and incense burnt to the pots, and then at night there is a sword and spear dance in the compound of the hut. On the second day the Pariahs come to the shrine, and wash the small black stones and images representing the goddesses, with oil, milk, cocoanut-milk, lime-juice and water, put on them some new pieces of cloth, garland them with flowers, and mark them with sandal-wood paste. Then they boil rice on the spot, and offer it to the goddesses, and afterwards bring to the shrine sheep, pigs, and fowls. Water is first poured over each sheep, and, if it shivers, it is accepted by the goddess, if not, it is rejected. Then one of the PARIAH Pujāris cuts off the head of the acceptable victims with a sword. If the head is cut off at one blow, another Pujāri, who is supposed to be under the influence of the deity, sucks out the blood from the neck of the carcase. During the night he thus sucks the blood of about a hundred sheep. After the sheep have been killed, four or five pigs are offered by a few of the PARIAHS, who have made vows. The head of each pig is cut off with a chopper, and then a small quantity of blood is collected in some earthen vessels, newly brought from the potter's house, and placed inside the shrine. When all the people have left the place, the Pujāris mix this blood with some boiled rice, and throw it about a hundred yards outside the shrine to the north-west, north-east, south-east, and south-west, and that ends the festival. The sucking of the blood is a horrid business, but not so horrid as an annual ceremony which takes place every February or March at TRICHINOPOLY, one of the great centres of trade and education in the TAMIL country, during the festival of KULUMAI-AMMAN, who is regarded as the guardian against cholera and cattle plague, and epidemics generally. A very fat Pujāri of the VELLĀLA caste, who holds this unenviable office by hereditary right, is lifted up above the vast crowd on the arms of two men; some two thousand kids are then sacrificed one after the other, the blood of the first eight or ten is collected in a large silver vessel holding about a quart, and handed up to the Pujāri, who drinks it all. Then, as the throat of each kid is cut, the animal is handed up to him, and he sucks or pretends to suck the blood out of the carcase. The belief of the people is that the blood is consumed by the spirit of KULUMAI-AMMAN in the Pujāri; and her image stands on a platform during the ceremony about fifteen yards away. A similar idea is probably expressed by a particularly

revolting method of killing sheep, which is not uncommon in TAMIL villages during these festivals. One of the Pujāris, who is sometimes painted to represent a leopard, flies at the sheep like a wild beast, seizes it by the throat with his teeth, and kills it by biting through the jugular vein.

There is another strange ceremony, which is quite common in the TAMIL country, connected with the propitiation of the boundary goddess, where the blood of the victim seems to be regarded as the food of malignant spirits. At Irungalur, a village about fourteen miles from TRICHINOPOLY, it forms the conclusion of the festival to the local goddess KURUMBAI. During the first seven days the image is duly washed, offerings of rice and fruit are made, and processions are held through the streets of the village. Then, on the eighth day, a small earthen pot, called the KARAGAM, is prepared at the shrine of the goddess

The elaborate decorations of the KARAGAM have been already described on page 123, and I need not describe them again. When it is ready, some boiled rice, fruits, cocoanuts and incense are first offered to it, and then the Pujāri ties on his wrist a cord (KAPU) dyed with yellow turmeric, to protect him from evil spirits. A lamb is next brought and sacrificed in front of him, to give him supernatural power, and he then takes the KARAGAM on his head, marches with it in procession through the village to the sound of tom-toms and pipes, and finally deposits it under a booth erected in the middle of the village. On the eighth, ninth and tenth days the KARAGAM is taken in procession morning and evening, and rice and fruits, camphor and incense are also offered to it.

On the tenth day, at about 7 A.M. before the procession starts, a lamb is killed in front of the KARAGAM. The throat is first cut, and then the head cut off, and the blood collected in a new earthen pot filled with boiled rice. The pot is put in a frame of ropes and taken by a PUJĀRI to a stone planted in the ground, about four feet high, called ELLAIKAL (*i.e.*, boundary stone), some three hundred yards off. A crowd of villagers run after him with wild yells, but no tom-toms or pipes are played. When he comes to the boundary stone, he runs round it thrice, and the third time throws the pot over his shoulder behind him on to another smaller stone, about two feet high and some five or six feet in circumference, which stands at the foot of the ELLAIKAL. The earthen pot is dashed to pieces and the rice and blood scatter over the two stones and all around them. The pujāri

then runs quickly back to the booth, where the KARAGAM stands, without looking behind him, followed by the crowd in dead silence. The man who carries the pot is supposed to be possessed by KARUMBAI, and is in a frantic state as he runs to the boundary stone, and has to be held up by some of the crowd, to prevent his falling to the ground. The pouring out of the rice and blood is regarded as a propitiation of an evil spirit residing in the boundary stone, called ELLAI-KARUPPAI, and of all the evil and malignant spirits of the neighbourhood, who are his attendants. When the Pujāri gets back to the booth, he prostrates himself before the KARAGAM, and all the people do the same. Then they go to bathe in the neighbouring tank, and afterwards return to the booth, when another lamb is sacrificed, and the procession starts off through the village. In the evening of the same day a pig, a sheep and a cock are bought from the funds of the shrine, and taken to the shrine itself, which stands outside the village. There they are killed in front of a stone image of MADURAI-VĪRAN, which stands in a separate little shrine in front of that of KARUMBAI. A large quantity of rice is boiled inside the walls of the compound, and then the flesh of the three animals is cooked and made into curry. The rice and curry are put on a cloth, spread over straw, in front of the image, while the Pujāri does puja to MADURAI-VĪRAN inside his shrine, offering arrack, fruit, flowers, incense and camphor, and saying mantrams; afterwards he sprinkles some water on the curry and rice, which are then distributed to the people present. During this sacrifice to MADURAI-VĪRAN KARUMBAI's shrine is closed.

The ceremony of propitiating the spirit of the boundary stone is very common in the TRICHINOPOLY DISTRICT, though there are the usual variations of local custom in performing it. At a village, called PULLAMBADĪ, it takes place in connection with the festival of KULANTHALAMMAN, which lasts for fifteen days. On the first day the image is washed, and a sheep killed outside the enclosure as a sacrifice to KARUPPU, the door of the shrine being closed. Rice, fruit, flowers, etc., are also offered to the goddess. On the next six days only rice, fruits, etc., are offered; but on the eighth day two more sheep are sacrificed to KARUPPU. From the ninth to the fifteenth day the metal image of the goddess is taken in procession round the village, each day on a different VAHANAM (vehicle); on the fifteenth day it is carried on a car, and on this day three sheep are killed in front of the

shrine, before the procession starts, the blood being collected in an earthen pot and mixed with boiled rice. Then a sheep is sacrificed at each of the nine corners of the streets that surround the temple, and the blood of all the sheep is put into earthen vessels by a pujāri of the SHERVĀGARU caste, called the KAPPUKARAN, the animals being all killed by one of the pariahs. The KAPPUKARAN then mixes all the blood and rice together in one large earthen pot and carries it to the village, which is about half a mile away. Nine more sheep are sacrificed at nine other corners of the village itself, and their blood is again collected and mixed with the rest. When the car has come back to its resting place and the procession is finished, the KAPPUKARAN takes the large vessel full of blood and rice, and, followed by all the men of the village, some holding him by the arms, goes to the western boundary of the village lands, where is the boundary stone, ELLAIKAL, about two feet square and one and-a-half high. A lamb is then killed over the stone, so that its blood flows over it; and the head, which has been cut off, is then placed on the top of the stone. The KAPPUKARAN runs thrice round the stone, carrying the pot full of rice and blood in a framework of ropes, and, facing the stone, dashes the pot against it. This done, he at once runs away, without stopping to look back. The other villagers go away before the pot is broken. This concludes the ceremonies of the festival.

At another village, SEMBIA, in the PUDUKŌTTAI TALUQ, the ceremonies connected with the propitiation of boundary spirits are rather more elaborate. There is a boundary stone at each of the four corners of the village site, five more stones inside the village, and another stone on the boundary of the village land. During the PIDĀRI festival boiled rice, fruits, etc., are offered at all the nine boundary stones in the village, and on the sixteenth day the image of PIDĀRI is taken to the house of the pujāri, who is to perform the dread ceremony of propitiating the spirits that inhabit the boundary stone of the village lands.

The pujāri puts the KAPU (the cord dyed with turmeric) on his wrist, and a goat, entirely black, is sacrificed before the image, and its blood is collected in an earthen pot, but not mixed with rice. The metal image of PIDĀRI is then carried in procession, and at each of the nine stones in the village itself a lamb is sacrificed. When this procession is ended, the pujari with the KAPU on his wrist

takes the earthen pot, with the blood of the black goat inside it, fastens it inside a frame of ropes, and runs to the boundary stone on the extreme limit of the village land. About twenty or thirty villagers run with him, holding him by the arms, as he is out of his senses, being possessed with PIDĀRI. When he arrives at the stone, he runs once round, and then stands facing it, and dashes the pot against it. Without a moment's delay and without looking behind him, he runs back to the place where PIDĀRI is seated on the wooden horse, on which she was carried round the village. The image is taken back to the shrine, and the ceremony is at an end.

An untoward event happened a few years ago, in connection with one of these PIDĀRI festivals, at one village in the TRICHINOPOLY District. The festival had commenced and the pujari had tied the KAPU on his wrist, when a dispute arose between the trustees of the shrine, which caused the festival to be stopped. The dispute could not be settled, and the festival was suspended for three years, and during all that time there could be no marriages among the UDAYA caste, while the poor pujāri, with the KAPU on his wrist, had to remain the whole of the three years in the temple, not daring to go out, lest PIDĀRI in her wrath should slay him. At a village in the TANJORE District, called TUKANAPALIAM, the boundary spirits are propitiated during the KALIAMMAN festival by the sacrifice of a buffalo. On the last day of the festival the image of KALIAMMAN, who in many parts of the TANJORE District is specially the goddess of the boundary, is taken to the boundary stone, and then one he-buffalo is killed beside the stone and buried in a pit close by; but nothing is done either with the head or the blood.

The worship of the village deity at a village, called MAHAKALIKUDI, about eight miles from TRICHINOPOLY, presents several rather curious features. The chief deity is a goddess called UJINIHONKALI or MAHAKALI. In her shrine are four subordinate female deities ELLIAMMAN, PULLATHALAMMAN, VISHALAKSHMIAMMAN, and ANGALAMMAN, and three subordinate male deities MADURAI-VĪRAN, BATHALAMA and IYENAR. (This is the only place where I have come across IYENAR as a subordinate deity.) In this temple UJINIHONKALI is worshipped by all classes, including the BRAHMANS, and while some of the pujāris are SUDRAS, the others are BRAHMANS. An old Munsif of the district told me that he could remember the time when all the pujāris were SUDRAS. The BRAHMANS

appear to have secured a footing in the shrine about fifty years ago. The yearly festival is held in February or March and lasts sixteen days.

On the first day, called KANKANADHARANAM, a gold bangle, or bracelet (KANKANAM) is prepared for the occasion by the temple authorities and put on the wrist of the image, which is made of the five metals in the form of a woman, and stands about three feet high. This must be done at an auspicious hour either of the day or night. One of the SUDRA pujāris at the same time puts a KAPU (a cotton bracelet dyed yellow with turmeric), on his own right wrist. Boiled rice, cocoanuts, plantains and limes are afterwards offered to the goddess, lights are placed all over the shrine, and incense and camphor are burnt. For eight days the same ceremonies are repeated, the same bangle put on the wrist of the image and the same KAPU on the wrist of the pujāri.

On the ninth day this bangle is removed, and put in the treasury of the shrine, and a new one put on. The same offerings are made as on the other days, but on this day, for the first time, the image is taken out and carried in procession on a small wooden platform, adorned with tinsel, through the village with music and tom-toms, torches and fireworks

These ceremonies are then repeated till the end of the festival, but each day, till the fourteenth, the image is carried on a different vehicle or VAHANAM; on the tenth day on a wooden horse, on the eleventh on a car, on the twelfth on a wooden lion, on the thirteenth in a palanquin, on the fourteenth on a swan or bull. No animal sacrifices are performed during the festival at the shrine itself; but on the eleventh day many sheep and goats are sacrificed in connection with the car procession. Just after the image is put on the car, a kid is brought in front of it and decapitated by a village watchman, or KAVALGAR, of the UMBELLAYAR caste. The KAVALGAR takes up the head and carcase and carries them round the car, letting the blood drip upon the ground, and then gives both to a Pariah servant of the shrine. When the car returns, a sheep is sacrificed in front of it. Its head is cut off by the KAVALGAR, and its head and body are allowed to lie upon the ground, while fruits, cocoanuts and camphor are offered. The man, who provides the sheep, ultimately takes the body, and the pujāri the head. While the car is being dragged through the streets, people who have made vows bring sheep to the

doors of their houses, and the KAVALGAR comes with his heavy chopper and cuts off their heads.

At the neighbouring village of KANNANUR, there is a curious local variation in the ordinary rite of sacrifice. During the festival of MARIAMMAN many people, who have made vows, bring sheep, goats, fowls, pigeons, parrots, cows and calves to the temple, and leave them in the compound alive. At the end of the festival these animals are all sold to a contractor! Two years ago they fetched Rs. 400, a good haul for the temple, which is a particularly large one, covering two acres of ground, enclosed by a high wall.

Buffalo sacrifices are not as common in the TAMIL as in the TELUGU country, but they are offered in many villages, especially in connection with the worship of MADURA-KALI-AMMAN. At a village called TURAYUR near TRICHINOPOLY, a buffalo sacrifice is offered once in five or six years. Before the day of the festival is fixed, the chief men of the village go to the shrine, offer rice and fruits, etc., and ask the goddess whether they may perform the festival. If a lizard utters a chirp in a part of the temple fixed on beforehand, it is taken as a sign that permission is given and the festival is arranged. The buffaloes devoted for sacrifice are generally chosen, some time beforehand, by people who make vows in sickness or trouble, and then allowed to roam about the village at will. When they become troublesome, the people go and ask permission of the deity to hold a sacrifice. The buffaloes are brought to the shrine on the appointed day, and killed by a man of the KALLAR caste, who cuts off the heads with a chopper. Nothing is done with the blood, but both head and carcase are thrown into a pit close by the shrine as soon as the animal is dead. The same pit is used at each festival, but it is cleared out for each occasion. When all the carcases have been put in, incense and camphor are burnt, cocoanut and fruits are offered on the edge of the pit, and then earth is thrown in, and the carcases are covered up. This takes place outside the temple walls, and during the sacrifice a curtain is drawn before the shrine, where the immovable stone image of the goddess is located; but, on the other hand, the metal image, used in processions, is taken out before the sacrifice begins, carried on a wooden lion, and placed on four stone pillars specially erected for the purpose outside the temple, about four or five yards from the place where the buffaloes are killed. No curtain is drawn before this image, but the sacrifice is performed in full view of the goddess. It is a curious little compromise between ancient

custom and BRAHMAN prejudice. At another village I found that BRAHMAN ideas had taken one step further in the worship of MADURA-KALIAMMAN, as no animal sacrifices of any kind are offered there to the goddess herself, but only to PERIYANNA-SWĀMI, a male deity residing on the top of a hill some three miles away from her shrine, and even there the pujāris lamented that, owing to the degeneracy of the age, offerers now take away both head and carcase for their own use, instead of leaving the head, as was done in better days, to be the perquisite of the pujāris. At one village I was told that there used to be buffalo sacrifices some twenty years ago; but the people did not know to what deity they were offered and none are ever offered now.

At PULLAMBADI, a village of some size in the TRICHINOPOLY DISTRICT, I was told that MADURA-KĀLI only accepts "VĒDIC," *i.e.*, holy sacrifices. All animal sacrifices, therefore, are made to MADURAI-VĪRAN or KARUPPU, and a curtain is drawn before MADURA-KĀLI while they are being offered. The pujāri in this village collects the blood of the animals in an earthen pot, mixes it with rice, and makes it up into little balls. Then, possessed by KARUPPU or MADURAI-VĪRAN, he takes the pot and runs round the temple enclosure, and at each corner throws up a ball of rice and blood, which is carried off by KARUPPU or MADURAI-VĪRAN, so the people firmly believe, and never falls down. The Munsif, who was quite a well educated man, assured me that this was a fact, and that he had seen it with his own eyes—only, as he admitted, the ceremony takes place in the dark!

Buffaloes are offered in some villages of the TANJORE DISTRICT both to KALIAMMAN and PIDĀRI. Where the sacrifice is strictly performed, as at VALLAM, the pujāri, who is a SUDRA, lives only on milk and fruit, and eats only once a day for a whole month beforehand, and on the day of the sacrifice puts the KAPU (cotton bracelet dyed with turmeric) on his right wrist before he takes hold of the sacrificial sword. It is supposed that he is first inspired by the deity before he can kill the victim. He cuts off the head sometimes in one blow, and sometimes in two or three. Nothing is done with the blood, and both head and carcase are buried in a pit near the shrine. The dung of the victim is mixed with water, and poured over the image of the deity. In some villages in the TAMIL country it is customary to take the entrails of the victim and hang them round the pujāri's neck, and put

the liver in his mouth during the procession, when the rice and blood is sprinkled through the village, and sometimes part of the entrails are cooked with rice and presented before the image. At one village I found that, after this procession had gone round the houses, it passed on to the burning ghāt, where the entrails are taken from the pujāri's neck and the liver from his mouth, and both are deposited with some curry and rice, which is afterwards eaten by a few of the low-caste people. These extremely repulsive processions, however, are not, as in the TELUGU country, especially connected with buffalo sacrifices.

An unfeeling custom prevails in one village, that I came across, which is considerably worse than seething a kid in its mother's milk. When a pig is sacrificed to ANGALAMMAN, its neck is first cut slightly at the top and the blood allowed to flow on to some boiled rice placed on a plantain leaf, and then the rice soaked in its own blood is given to the pig to eat. If the pig eats it, the omen is good, if not, the omen is bad; but in any case the pig has its head cut off by a SUDRA pujāri. In some villages the blood of the pig, offered to ANGALAMMAN, is mixed with boiled rice, taken to the burning ghāt, where the dead bodies are burned, and thrown into the air at night, as an offering to the evil spirits that hover round the place.

Among other curious applications of the blood of animals, not the least interesting and significant is the one that prevails in nearly all the villages of the PUDUKKŌTTAI TALUQ of the TRICHINOPOLY District, where it is the custom for all the villagers to dip cloths in the blood of animals slain simply for food, and hang them up on the eaves of their houses to protect the cattle against disease. This is probably a relic of an age when animal food was only eaten at the time of sacrifice.

It is refreshing to turn to a custom, connected with the worship of village deities, which can make some pretence to practical utility. In the village of PULLAMBADI, at the shrine of KULANTHAL AMMAN, whose festival has already been described on page 167, an interesting custom prevails, which seems to be not uncommon in those parts. When a creditor cannot recover a debt, he writes out a statement of his claim against his debtor on dried palmyra leaves, presents it to the goddess, and hangs it up on a spear before her image. If the claim is just, and the debtor does not pay, it is believed that he will be afflicted with sickness and terrifying dreams,

and that in his dreams the goddess will warn him to pay the debt at once. If, however, he disputes the claim, then he in turn writes out his statement of the case, and hangs it up on the same spear. The deity then decides which statement is true, and afflicts the perjurer with dreams and misfortunes, till the false statement is withdrawn. When the claim is acknowledged, the debtor brings the money to the pujāri, who places it before the goddess, and then sends for the creditor and informs him that the debt is paid. All the money thus paid into the temple coffers is handed over to the various creditors during the festival in April or May, after deducting the amount due to the temple treasury. This is certainly a simple method of doing justice in the matter of debts, and probably just as effective as the more elaborate and more expensive processes of our Courts of Law. I was told that about ten creditors come to the temple every year, and that the temple had made about Rs. 3,000, as its commission on the debts collected, during the last thirty years. Before that time the people came and stated their claims to the goddess orally, promising to give her a share, if the debts were recovered; but some thirty years ago the system of written statements was introduced, which, evidently, has proved far more effectual in the settlement of just claims, and much more profitable to the temple. To the practical British mind this seems the one really sensible ceremony connected with the worship of the village deities in South India.

PROBABLE ORIGIN OF THE WORSHIP OF VILLAGE DEITIES.

The account given above of the rites and ceremonies connected with the worship of the village deities in South India does not pretend to be an exhaustive one. It would require many bulky volumes to enumerate the innumerable varieties of local use and custom prevailing in the different villages, and the result would be wearisome in the extreme; but enough has been said, I think, to give a fair idea of the general nature and character of this phase of HINDUISM, and to form a basis of comparison, on the one hand between the cult of the village deities and the BRAHMANICAL cults of VISHNU and SIVA, and on the other hand between the cults of village deities existing among the TELUGUS, CANARESE, and TAMILS; and, at any rate, this brief sketch of the religion of about 80 per cent. of the HINDU population of South

India may serve to dispel the idea, sometimes derived from a study of the classical literature of India, that the people of India are, as a body, a race of philosophers, or that, what is vaguely termed HINDUISM, is a system of refined philosophy, almost rivalling CHRISTIANITY or European philosophy in the purity of its morality and subtlety of its doctrines. Religious philosophy, undoubtedly, has played a great part in the development of the higher thought of the Indian people; but in South India, at any rate, the outlook of about 80 per cent. of the population on the visible world in which they live, and the invisible world which borders closely upon it, and their ideas about GOD and religion are represented, not by HINDU philosophy, but by the worship of their GRĀMA-DĒVATAS.

Considerable caution must be used in drawing conclusions from the striking resemblances between the ceremonies observed in the worship of village deities among the TELUGUS, CANARESE, and TAMILS, as the value of all evidence of this kind is largely discounted by the unifying influence of the great VIJIANAGAR EMPIRE. For about 250 years, from 1326 A.D. to 1565 A.D., the whole of South India was united under this great Empire, which had its capital on the TUNGABHADRA River, and formed the great bulwark of HINDUISM against the advance of the MUHAMMADANS. The capital itself was of vast extent, and gathered together men and women of all races from every part of South India. It must have formed, therefore, a great centre for the fusion of different ideas and customs; and, when the City of VIJIANAGAR was captured and rased to the ground by the MUHAMMADANS in 1565 A.D., TAMILS, TELUGUS, and CANARESE, may well have carried home with them many new ideas and customs borrowed from one another. We cannot assume, therefore, that, because a custom is widespread in the TAMIL, TELUGU, or CANARESE country now, it necessarily formed part of the worship of the village deities before the foundation of the VIJIANAGAR EMPIRE. Allowing, however, for this possible borrowing of religious rites and ceremonies, the resemblances between the rites in all three countries are very striking. Such a curious ceremony as that of cutting off the right fore-leg and putting it into the mouth of the victim, which is found to exist all over the three countries in various villages and towns, might possibly have been borrowed; but the general resemblance in type, which underlies all local differences of custom, can hardly have been due to this cause, and the general impression left by

a study of the various festivals and sacrifices in the three countries would be, I think, that they all belong to a common system, and had a common origin.

In the same way caution is needed in drawing conclusions from the resemblances between the worship of the village deities and the BRAHMANICAL cults of VISHNU and SIVA. The two systems of religion have existed side by side in the towns and villages for many centuries, and the same people have largely taken part in both. Naturally, therefore, they have borrowed freely from one another. In the TAMIL country the influence of BRAHMANISM on the cult of the village deities is very noticeable, and it is more than probable that many ceremonies, which originally belonged to the village deities, have been adopted by the BRAHMAN priests. No conclusions, therefore, can safely be drawn from the folk-lore, which represents various village goddesses as, in some way, connected with SIVA. It is quite possible that stories of this kind are simply due to a desire to connect the less dignified village deities with what was regarded as the higher form of worship controlled by the BRAHMANS. On the other hand, the points of difference between the worship of the village deities and that of SIVA and VISHNU, which have been noted in the introduction, are very strongly marked, and clearly indicate that the two systems of religion are quite distinct. The village goddesses are purely local deities, inflicting or warding off diseases and other calamities. They seem never to be regarded as having any relation to the world as a whole, and their worship is the religion of ignorant and uncivilized people, whose thoughts do not travel beyond their own surroundings and personal needs. On the other hand, SIVA and VISHNU represent a philosophic conception of great forces at work in the universe, forces of destruction and preservation, and their worship is a religion that could only have originated among men accustomed to philosophic speculation. They may have borrowed many ideas, customs and ceremonies from the more primitive religion of the villages; but the foundation and motive of the whole system are to be sought in the brain of the philosopher rather than in the fears and superstitions of uneducated villagers. At the same time, it is also true that morally the BRAHMANICAL system has sunk to lower depths than have been reached by the cruder religion of the village people. The worship of the village deities contains much that is physically repulsive. The details of a buffalo sacrifice are horrid to read about, and still worse to witness, and the sight of a PUJĀRI parading the streets with the entrails of a

lamb round his neck and its liver in his mouth would be to us disgusting; and, doubtless, there is much drunkenness and immorality connected with the village festivals; while the whole system of religion is prompted by fear and superstition, and seems almost entirely lacking in anything like a sense of sin or feelings of gratitude towards a higher spiritual Power. But still it is also true that, setting aside a few local customs in the worship of the village deities, there is nothing in the system itself which is quite so morally degrading and repulsive as the LINGAM worship of the SIVAITES, or the marriage of girls to the god, and their consequent dedication to a life of prostitution among the VAISHNAVITES. If the worship of SIVA and VISHNU has risen to greater heights, it has also sunk to lower moral depths than the less intellectual and less æsthetic worship of the GRĀMA-DĒVATAS.

What the origin of the village deities and their worship may have been, it is difficult to say. The system, as it now exists, combines many different ideas and customs, and has probably resulted from the fusion of various forms of religion. In the TAMIL country there are many features in the worship of the village deities, which, obviously, have been adopted from BRAHMANISM, *e.g.*, the elaborate washing of the images, and the growing aversion to animal sacrifices. So in MYSORE, there are traces of sun-worship in the cult of BISAL-MARI; and there are many features in the system everywhere, which seem obviously to be borrowed from the worship, or rather propitiation of the spirits of the departed. But the system as a whole is redolent of the soil, and evidently belongs to a pastoral and agricultural community. The village is the centre round which the system revolves, and the protection of the villagers the object for which it exists. At the same time, it is quite possible that the ultimate origin of the religion may be traced further back to a nomadic stage of society. Very many of the rites and ceremonies have now entirely lost their meaning, and, when the people are asked what a particular ceremony means or what its object is, their usual reply is simply "it is MĀMUL," *i.e.*, custom; and there are many details of the sacrifices, which seem strangely inconsistent with the general idea and theory of the worship, which now prevails. The one object of all the worship and sacrifices now is to propitiate various spirits, good and evil. And this is done by means of gifts, which, it is supposed, the spirits like, or by ceremonies which will please them. Some of the spirits are supposed to delight in bloodshed, so animals are killed in their

presence, and sometimes even the blood is given them to drink; or blood and rice are sprinkled over the fields and streets, or thrown up in the air for them to eat. To the less refined goddesses or to the coarser male attendants, like MADURAI-VĪRAN, arrack, toddy and cheroots are freely offered, because it is assumed that these gifts will rejoice their hearts, and propitiate them. But a great deal of the ritual, and many of the most striking ceremonies are quite inconsistent with this gift-theory of sacrifice and the idea of propitiation, which is now assumed to be the one motive and purpose of the festivals. For instance, one of the main features of the animal sacrifices is the varied applications of the blood of the victims. Sometimes, the blood is applied to the bodies of the worshippers themselves, to their foreheads and breasts, sometimes it is sprinkled on the lintel and doorposts of the shrine, sometimes on the houses or cattle, sometimes on the boundary stones, sometimes it is mixed with rice and scattered over the streets, or sprinkled all round the boundaries of the village lands. But what possible meaning could these various uses of the blood have according to the gift-theory of sacrifice? On this theory it would be intelligible why it should be presented, as is sometimes done, at the shrine of the deity, or even drunk, as at TRICHINOPOLY, by the Pujāri, who represents the goddess; but of these other uses of the blood, the gift-theory seems to furnish no adequate explanation. Or again, what possible meaning could the gift-theory suggest for the widespread custom of putting the entrails round the neck of the pujāri, and the liver in his mouth? It is not probable that such a custom as this originated without there being some reason or idea at the back of it; but on the gift-theory it seems absolutely meaningless.

Or again, another leading feature of the worship is the sacrificial feast in various forms. Sometimes the feast takes place on the spot in the compound of the shrine, more often the carcase is taken home by the offerer for a feast in his own house. Sometimes it is a formal and ceremonious act, as in certain villages of the TELUGU country, where five little MĀLA boys, called SIDDHULU, or "innocents," are fed with the flesh of the victim under cover of a large cloth, to keep off evil spirits or the evil eye. Here, again, the gift-theory seems quite inconsistent with the whole idea of the sacrificial feast. The explanations often given, that the goddess consumes the essence or spirit (*Saram* or *Avi*) of the gifts, while the worshippers take the material substance, is probably quite modern, and is certainly far too subtle to have occurred to the

mind of the primitive villager. I shrewdly suspect that it has really been borrowed from the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, as I have chiefly met with it in districts, where the Roman Catholic Church has been, for some two centuries, strong and influential; but, in any case, it can hardly be regarded as the original idea, which explains the sacrificial feast. On the other hand, all these ceremonies, which form some of the leading features of the whole system, find a natural and ready explanation, if we assume that the system originated in the desire for communion with the deity worshipped, and not in the idea of propitiation.

In the nomadic stage the natural form of society is that of tribes or clans, the members of which are akin to one another, or, at any rate, are assumed to be united by ties of blood relationship. All the members of the clan, then, are blood relations, and are bound together, as members of one family, for mutual help and protection. The normal attitude of every clan towards other clans is one of suspicion, hostility and war, and this constant pressure of hostile clans compels each individual clan, not only to maintain its unity and brotherhood, but, if possible, to enlarge its limits and add to its numbers. It becomes possible to do this by a convenient extension of the idea of blood relationship. If a man is not one of the clan by birth, he can be made one by, in some way, being made a partaker of its blood. In his "Introduction to the History of Religion" Mr. Jevons quotes several instances of this from different parts of the world, in both ancient and modern times.

The following examples from Africa will suffice to illustrate the custom:—"The exchange of blood is often practised amongst the blacks of Africa, as a token of alliance and friendship. The Mambettu people, after having inflicted small wounds upon each others' arms, reciprocally suck the blood, which flows from the incision. In the Unyora country the parties dip two coffee berries into the blood, and eat them. Amongst the Sandeh the proceedings are not so repulsive; the operator, armed with two sharp knives, inoculates the blood of one person into the wound of another. The exact manner in which this last operation is performed is described by Mr. Ward, who himself submitted to it. After noting that blood brotherhood is a form of cementing friendship and a guarantee of good faith, popular with all the Upper Congo tribes, he proceeds: "An incision was made in both our right arms, in the outer muscular swelling just below the elbow, and as the blood flowed in a tiny

stream, the charm doctor sprinkled powdered chalk and potash on the wounds, delivering the while, in rapid tones, an appeal to us to maintain unbroken the sanctity of the contract, and then, our arms being rubbed together, so that the flowing blood intermingled, we were declared to be brothers of one blood, whose interests henceforth should be united as our blood now was'."

These examples will suffice to illustrate the widespread idea that the actual drinking or application of the blood of a clan will create a blood-relationship and alliance among men, who are not actually members of the same family. It can easily be seen, then, how readily this idea would extend to the sphere of religion in what is generally known as the totemistic stage. The human clan in its struggle for existence found itself surrounded, not only by other human clans, but also by various tribes of animals, whom it looked upon as analogous to the clans of men; and it desired to strengthen its position by an alliance with one or another of these animal clans, which, for some reason, impressed itself upon its imagination as animated by some supernatural power. The animal clan then became what is now called the totem of the human clan; and the spirit that was supposed to animate the totem clan became, in a certain sense, an object of worship. One great purpose of the worship, then, was to cement and strengthen the alliance between the human clan and the animal clan; and the way in which this was done was through some application of the blood of the totem, or by, in some way, coming into contact with that which was specially connected with its life, or by partaking of its flesh. The object, then, of killing a member of the totem tribe becomes clear. Under ordinary circumstances it would be absolutely forbidden, and regarded as the murder of a kinsman; but on special occasions it was solemnly done in order to shed the blood and partake of the flesh, and so strengthen the alliance. The blood is regarded as the life, and when the blood of a member of the totem tribe of animals was shed, the life of the totem was brought to the spot where it was needed, and the blood could be applied to the worshippers as a bond of union, and then the union could be still further cemented by the feast upon the flesh, by which the spirit of the totem was absorbed and assimilated by its human kinsmen. The object of the animal sacrifice, therefore, was not in any sense to offer a gift, but to obtain communion with the totem-spirit.

Now, if we apply this theory of sacrifice to the sacrifices offered to the village deities in South India, we see that the

main ceremonies connected with them at once become intelligible; the various modes of sprinkling and applying the blood, and the different forms of the sacrificial feast were all originally intended to promote communion with the spirit that was worshipped. In the same way, even such a ceremony as the wearing of the entrails round the neck, and putting the liver in the mouth, acquires an intelligible meaning and purpose. The liver and entrails are naturally connected with the life of the animal, and the motive of this repulsive ceremony would seem to be an intense desire to obtain as close communion as possible with the object of worship by wearing those parts of its body that are specially connected with its life. So, too, this theory explains why the animal sacrificed is so often treated as an object of worship. In the case of the buffalo sacrifices in the TELUGU country, as we have seen, the buffalo is paraded through the village, decked with garlands and smeared with turmeric and kunkuma, and then, as it passes by the houses, people come out and pour water on its feet, and worship it. But why should this be done if the animal sacrificed is regarded as only a gift to the goddess? When, however, we realize that the animal sacrificed was not originally regarded as a gift, but as a member of the totem tribe and the representative of the spirit to be worshipped, the whole ceremony becomes full of meaning.

Then again, this theory of the origin of sacrifice supplies a very plausible and intelligible explanation of the origin of the use of stones and images to represent the village deities in India. At first sight it seems a complete mystery why a common, ordinary stone should be regarded as representing a god or goddess. Most of the stones used for this purpose in South Indian villages have absolutely nothing that is peculiar or distinctive about them. Often they are simply stone pillars of varying heights, and a large number are only small, conical stones, not more than six or seven inches high. Some, again, are flat slabs with figures carved on them in *bas relief*, and others are regular images. The images and carved *bas reliefs* we can understand; but how could these ordinary stones and stone pillars have ever come to be regarded as the representatives of spiritual beings? The theory of sacrifice connected with totemism supplies, at any rate, a possible and intelligible explanation. The Totem animal was killed in order to shed the blood and so secure the presence of the Totem deity at a particular spot, which then became sacred or taboo. To violate it would be a

grievous offence. Accordingly the spot was marked by a simple heap of stones or by an upright stone pillar, which would perhaps be sprinkled with the blood. Then, as totemism gradually died out and gave place to higher religious ideas and anthropomorphic conceptions of deity, the old totemistic conception of sacrifice became obscured, and the animal that was killed was regarded no longer as the representative of the object of worship, but as a gift to the deity. At the same time the sanctity of the spot became associated with the stones, originally set up to mark the place of sacrifice, and so in time the stone pillar itself became sacred, and came to be treated as the symbol of the deity to whom the sacrifice was offered, while the heap of stones developed into the sacred altar. We can probably trace one stage of his process of evolution in the ideas now connected with the boundary stone, ELLAI-KAL. No doubt, it was once simply a stone placed to mark the spot, on the boundary of the village lands, where the sacrifice was offered Then the stone became sacred, and the idea grew up that it was inhabited by the spirit who was worshipped. There, however, the process of evolution stopped, and the stone is not now regarded, like the other stones, as representing the deity, but simply as her abode.

Probably the other stones were once regarded in exactly the same light, and then advanced a step further and became representatives of the deities worshiped. The next step, to the carved human figures, whether *bas reliefs* or complete images, would be easy and natural, when once the deity had been conceived no longer as the spirit of a whole species of animals, but as akin to human beings.

When this change in religious ideas took place must, of course, be a matter of conjecture, but it probably coincided with the change from the nomadic to the settled pastoral and agricultural life, when the wandering clan developed into the village community, and the superiority of man to the lower animals had been definitely established.

And it is possible that the connection between the growth of agriculture and the origin of village communities, and so also of village deities, may account for the fact that the village deities of South India are almost always females. Agriculture naturally begins as the occupation of women rather than of men. The business of man in the tribe was to hunt and fight; but the cultivation of the fields, when it first began on a small scale, would almost certainly be regarded as part of the household duties of the women, and

beneath the dignity of their lords and masters. Indeed, it is a well known fact that, at the present day, among savage races, agriculture is left to the women. Hence it would be only natural that the agricultural deities, connected with the cultivation of the soil and probably at first exclusively worshipped by women, should be females rather than males. One trace of this is still found in the custom of the MĀLA PUJĀRI, who is a man, dressing up as a woman when he sits in the cart with the animals impaled alive all around him, and is dragged in procession through the village (*see* p. 136), as well as in the prominent part taken by women in some places in the waving of the ĀRATI (*see* p. 125).

These theories as to the origin of the village deities, of idolatry and of animal sacrifice in South India, can, of course, only be regarded as hypotheses. But, when we consider that the totemistic theory is able to furnish a plausible explanation of the crude form of idolatry which exists in many villages, and of many features in the sacrificial rites, which seem quite inconsistent with the existing ideas of sacrifice, we see that there is sufficient evidence to justify its adoption as a working hypothesis. And there can be no doubt that the ceremonial observed in these sacrifices gives very substantial support to the theory, that the original idea of sacrifice was not that of a gift to the deity, but communion with a supernatural power. And, if that is true, then we may see, even in these primitive rites, a foreshadowing of far higher forms of religious belief and practice. The mysterious efficacy attributed to the sprinkling of the blood might almost be regarded as an unconscious prophecy of the Christian doctrine of the Atonement, while the whole ritual of the sacrifices, even in its crudest and most revolting forms, bears witness to that instinctive craving after communion with GOD, which finds its highest expression and satisfaction in the sacramental system of the Christian church.

HENRY WHITEHEAD,
Bishop of Madras.

APPENDIX A.

WORSHIP OF KĀLI BY COOLIES FROM THE UNITED PROVINCES AND CENTRAL PROVINCES AT THE YELLANDU COAL FIELD IN THE DECCAN.

Kāli is the cholera goddess. There is a temple to her near the pits, with a small conical stone in the shrine, about a foot high to represent the goddess. On Monday, July 23rd, being an auspicious day, puja was performed. At about 9 A.M. they made a small round pit about 2 feet in diameter and 2 feet deep, in front of the temple, and filled it with wood, which they set fire to. At about 10 A.M. some North-country Brahmins came and did puja by throwing rice and ghee, cocoanuts, gram, corn, jawāri, incense and camphor into the pit. At about 12 o'clock cocoanuts, sweets and jaggery are distributed to all the people present, and then the Brahmins depart. After that the tom-toms and music begin, and the lower caste people, Mochis (leather-workers), Parsis (outcastes), Ahirs (cultivators), Loadths (cultivators), Koris (weavers), etc., bring about eleven goats. Two are first sacrificed about 10 yards from the pit near the temple. The heads are cut off by a man chosen for the occasion. Nothing is done with the blood or the heads. The carcases are taken away by the Parsis and Mochis. The procession then starts round the cooly lines and villages, headed by the tom-toms and music. There is no sprinkling of rice or blood. The other goats are sacrificed at intervals of about two or three furlongs, after the procession has started. Two pigs are also taken along with the procession, and buried alive about a mile from the temple on the outskirts of the village. A pit is dug about three feet deep, and one pig is buried alive there. It is entirely covered over with earth, and smothered. There it remains, and is never taken out. Another pit is dug about a mile away in the opposite direction, and the second pig is buried in the same way. No puja is performed while the pigs are buried; but the tom-toms and music play vigorously, and the people all shout *Kāli-mai-ke-jay* (victory to Kāli mother). Afterwards they all go to the nullah and bathe, and then return home.

The Telugu people on the coal field offer buffalo sacrifices, as well as sheep and goats, during the cholera epidemic to Mahan Kāli, at the temple. They do not go in procession round the villages or cooly lines; but go round the temple three times, and do puja by breaking cocoanuts and offering fruits, plantains and betel-nuts, camphor and incense. The blood of the victims is sprinkled over heaps of rice offered to Kāli, and then the rice and blood are buried near the temple: but none of it is ever sprinkled round the villages, or in the streets, or on the houses.

The Mālas and Mādigas do not join in this sacrifice, except that a Mādiga is brought to kill the buffaloes. The sheep and goats are killed by other people. The Mālas and Mādigas do puja separately under a banian tree about a mile from the village to Mahan-Kāli. She is represented by a flat stone, round at the top, with nothing carved on it. They offer goats, sheep and buffaloes, and cook the carcases and eat them on the spot. Some of the rice is mixed with blood, and kept before the image with cocoanuts, fruits, etc., but not sprinkled anywhere. The heads are all buried near the tree. After the feast, all the meat and food is buried, and nothing is taken away. A good deal of arrack and toddy are consumed during the feast, and a little is offered to the goddess.

APPENDIX B.

THE BURYING OF PIGS.

On page 137 I have described the ceremony of burying a pig up to its neck, and driving the cattle of the village over its head which is a common feature of village festivals in the Telugu country, and have referred to two possible explanations of the custom, viz., (*a*) that it is a relic of human sacrifice, (*b*) that it is connected with the worship of the village goddess as an agricultural deity, the pig being sacred to agricultural deities in other parts of the world. Since writing this account of the ceremony, I have come across another instance of pig-burying in the Kurnool district. While I was on tour there in March last, an old man described to me the account he had received from his "forefathers" of the ceremonies observed when founding a new village. An auspicious site is selected and an auspicious day, and then in the centre of the site is dug a large hole, in which are placed different kinds of grain, small pieces of the five metals, silver, copper, iron and lead, and a large stone, called Boddu-rayée (*i.e.*, navel-stone), standing about three and-a-half feet above the ground, very like the ordinary boundary stones seen in the fields. And then, at the entrance of the village, in the centre of the main street, where most of the cattle pass in and out on their way to and from the fields, they dig another hole and bury a pig alive. This ceremony would be quite consistent with either of the explanations suggested as the origin of pig-burying. The pig may be buried at the entrance to the village as the emblem of fertility and strength to secure the prosperity of the agricultural community, the fertility of the fields and the health and fecundity of the cattle. Or, it may equally be a substitute for an original human sacrifice. The idea that a new building or institution must be inaugurated by the sacrifice of a human life is very common all over India. To this day there is often a panic among the villagers who live near the banks of a river, where a bridge is about to be built, because they think that one or more of their babies are sure to be required to bury under the foundations of the first pier. And when I was at Kalásapad, in the

Cuddapah district, in March, the Rev. A. Groves, the Missionary there, told me that, when a new ward was opened for their local mission dispensary last year, no one would go into it because the people imagined that the first to go in would be the needful sacrifice. Their fears were allayed by a religious service at the opening of the ward, but, had it been a Hindu hospital, probably a goat or sheep would have been killed as a substitute for the human victim.

The idea of substitution too is quite common in India. In the hook-swinging ceremony described on page 155, it is common both in the Telugu and Tamil districts to substitute a sheep for a man, and fasten the iron hooks in the muscles of its back. I asked the villagers at one village whether they did not think this very cruel. They answered, "Not at all. It does not hurt the sheep. It only bleats because it is lifted high up and swung round. The same sheep is used for three or four years running!"

APPENDIX C.

MISCELLANEOUS ADDITIONS.

Since the bulletin has been printed a few miscellaneous facts have come to my knowledge which are worth recording—

(*a*) It is curious how impossible it is ever to make any general statement on any subject in India with any degree of certainty. I thought that it was the invariable rule in the buffalo sacrifices that the right foreleg, not the left, should be cut off and placed in the mouth of the victim. But last March when I was talking to the villagers at Uyyálaváda in the Kurnool district, some 14 miles south of Giddalur, an old man who was describing the ceremonies of the festival of Ankalamma stated that the left leg was cut off. I asked whether he was sure it was the left not the right. He looked with a puzzled air from his right leg to his left, unable to make up his mind, apparently, which was which. Then a Mādiga got up, and said it was the left. On my asking him whether he was quite sure, he answered, "I have cut it off myself, with my own hands, every time for the last twenty years, and so I knought to ow." This seemed conclusive, and I abandoned my attitude of scepticism. It has been suggested to me that the reason for cutting off the right leg is that the right leg or hand is propitious in the case of males, and the left in the case of females. But the buffalo sacrificed in all the cases that I have come across is a male, and yet apparently sometimes the left leg not the right is used.

(*b*) At the same village of Uyyálaváda in the Kurnool district, the people described the ceremonies used at the festivals of Ankalamma and Peddamma. The latter are very much the same as those already described on pp. 129–33, except that the feeding of the five Māla boys is omitted, and the left instead of the right leg of the buffalo is placed in its mouth, and the clay image of the goddess is finally deposited inside the boundary of the village not outside, for the very excellent reason that their neighbours would attack them if they attempted to convey the wrathful deity over

their frontiers. Elsewhere as a compromise, I was told, they put the image exactly on the boundary.

But the ceremonies at the Ankalamma festival are worth recording. The festival lasts five days. On the first they offer some rice. On the second they fill a brass pot, put kunkuma and turmeric on it, hang garlands of flowers and even jewels round its neck, and then carry it in procession with tom-toms and fireworks through the village, finally bringing it back again to the shrine. On the third day at noon they sacrifice a sheep, carry the carcase round the temple, boil some cholam, mix it with the blood, and then sprinkle the blood and cholam round the shrine. On the fourth day, they tie together a large armful of bamboos about seven feet high, make artificial flowers of cotton and turmeric, tie them round the bamboos from top to bottom and then place the bundle under a sacred "Jumbi" tree, and leave it there. On the fifth day a large car is made with an arrangement of poles for the hook swinging ceremony (*see* page 155). A sheep is then suspended from the pole by iron hooks fastened through the muscles of its back and a band round its middle and swung round and round. Formerly, about forty years ago, a man was swung instead of a sheep. Two or three of the elder men in the village said that they had often seen men swing like this with iron hooks fastened into their backs, and that it did not hurt. As soon as the sheep is swung up, buffaloes, sheep and goats are sacrificed, and the car is then dragged in procession through the village. This concludes the ceremonies of the festival.

(*c*) In the same taluk of the Kurnool district I was told that the Mālas of those parts worship Peddamma and Mathamma (mother) as their special deity, quite apart from the village festival of Peddamma in which all the villagers join, but with precisely the same rites. This strengthens the conclusion which I should be inclined to draw from the very prominent part which the Mālas and Mādigas (the two sections of the Pariahs or outcastes in the Telugu country) play in the buffalo sacrifice and the festival of Peddamma, viz., that Peddamma was the deity of the aborigines who were conquered and enslaved by the Turanian immigrants into South India, and then became one of the village deities of the conquerors. Apparently no other caste specially worships Peddamma as its own caste deity.

(*d*) A quaint little piece of information was given me by one of the revenue inspectors near Giddalur. As we were on the way to Giddalur in the early morning talking on religious subjects, he pointed to a conical hill, and remarked that it would turn into a volcano. I asked why? He said, because there was no shrine or temple or sacred pillar upon it, and that every conical hill which has not some religious stone or building upon it turns into a volcano. When I enquired how he knew that, he said that he was certain of it from his own observation, as he had noticed that no conical hill which had a religious building on it ever did turn into a volcano! and added that this accounted for the fact that there were so many volcanoes in Europe and none in India. In the face of the last fact it seemed useless to argue the question. I may add that the revenue inspectors are educated and intelligent government officers.

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